

Wounded Beirut fighters fly to Italy for treatment

LARNACA (AP) — A ferry boat carrying 21 wounded on their way from wartorn Lebanon to Italy for treatment, braved rough seas to dock at this southern Cyprus port Tuesday.

The wounded, who were among 200 passengers fleeing Lebanon's intra-Christian war, were transferred to an Italian Air Force C-130 transport plane bound for Villafranca Air Base in Italy.

"It was a tiring trip in a rough sea... some of the wounded were moaning as they had bad pain," said relief worker Waleed Khoury of the Lebanese Red Cross who worked in mobile hospitals that were erected in areas of fighting which killed 640 in the last 19 days.

He said many wounded civilians and fighters died during the clash because it was not possible to take them to hospitals due to the ferocity of the fighting. Doctors said three of the wounded aboard the Baroness M ferry boat belonged to renegade Gen. Michel Aoun's army. The rest were Lebanese Forces militiamen taken from hospitals in the Christian port of Jounieh, 17 kilometres north of Beirut.

Aoun's troops and warlord Samir Geagea's Lebanese Forces have been fighting for control of Lebanon's Christian enclave.

The ferry took 8 hours to navigate the 120 miles of sea. The boat was landing in landing to pick up passengers and wounded Saturday by fighting and Sunday by bad weather. It finally loaded Monday evening.

After the Baroness M docked

in Larnaca early Tuesday, the victims were transferred into eight ambulances which took them to the waiting Italian plane at Larnaca airport. Six of the ambulances belonged to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus and two to the Cypriot National Guard. Italian ambassador in Cyprus Guido Rizzo Venci supervised the operation which was sponsored by two humanitarian organizations based in Trento, Italy. Three staff members of the Italian embassy in Lebanon travelled to Italy on the same plane.

One of the Italians said the area around the embassy in Zouk, south of Jounieh, was hit several times during the fighting. There are thirty Italians left in the embassy, including families of the personnel.

Six volunteer doctors and a Lebanese translator came to Larnaca on the plane from Italy Saturday. The wounded were to be treated at hospitals in the northern Italian cities of Trento, Vicenza, Genoa, Verona and Treviso.

Some of the wounded, wearing thin pajamas were shivering while being carried by U.N. troops on stretchers into the ambulances at a temperature nearing zero degree Centigrade (32 F).

One of the wounded had lost his right leg. Four had eye in-

juries caused by shrapnel. "This one lost his sight," said a neighbouring victim of a man whose face was covered with bandages.

Lebanese consul to Cyprus Micheline Baz who came on the Baroness M, said of the intra-Christian fighting, "it was very bad... my niece is lying unconscious in the hospital and her parents couldn't get to their home to fetch the passports and take her for treatment abroad." Baz was trapped by the fighting while on a visit home.

Baz said she was hiding with her sister and 10-year-old niece in the same room when a shell struck the house in the coastal town of Zouk.

"Nothing happened to us... my niece escaped death, yes. But she will be paralyzed for the rest of her life," Baz said. A ceasefire has stopped the fighting since Saturday.

Many of the passengers were coming to Cyprus to apply for immigration to Canada, including one of the ferry's stewards, 25-year-old Gabi. He said he does not believe in Lebanon's cease-fires anymore.

"What's going on is pathetic," he said, "why should I stay there." By police count, nearly 2,000 have been wounded in nearly three weeks of fighting, the worst between rival Christian forces since the civil war broke out April 1975.

The fighting flared when Geagea rejected a demand from Aoun to disband his powerful militia.

U.N. accuses SLA for killing 2 UNIFIL troops in S Lebanon

TEL AVIV (R) — The United Nations accused pro-Israeli militiamen of killing two of its peacekeepers and wounding six in South Lebanon overnight.

Spokesman Timor Goksel of the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) said Tuesday the Lebanese soldiers were killed when a mortar bomb fired by the Israeli-armed South Lebanon Army (SLA) hit their positions late Monday.

Security sources in Lebanon said the SLA had not deliberately shot at the UNIFIL position and was firing at guerrillas.

The peacekeepers' deaths raised the UNIFIL toll to 172 since the force was created in 1978 to restore order in Lebanon following an Israeli invasion.

In Beirut, a pro-Iranian fundamentalist group said Muslim guerrillas, using mortars, had attacked the SLA.

Goksel said that the only shooting came from the SLA.

He said UNIFIL would protest to the Israeli army which arms and equips the SLA. UNIFIL has protested in the past at similar incidents and has accused Israel and the SLA of interfering with its mission.

"It was a fully lighted and marked UNIFIL position. Everyone knows its location and it has been there a long time. So how come a position that is known to be there is hit by mortar fire?" Goksel told Reuters after touring the area.

"We have no reports of any firing from the other side. We don't know what they were firing at... we will take it up with the IDF (Israeli army). They are the ones who give them the ammunition so we have to go to the source," Goksel said.

He said the mortar bomb was one of 15 fired from Israel's self-declared border "security zone" inside Lebanon about two kilometres from the Lebanese position at Buyut Sayyid.

"One of the 120-mm mortar rounds fell be-

tween the two prefab living quarters of the Lebanese forces. The commander, a warrant officer, was killed instantly as well as a soldier on duty. Six were wounded, one of them seriously," Goksel said.

Some UNIFIL soldiers were asleep at the time while others were fleeing to reinforced shelters because of the firing which also included heavy machinegun fire from another SLA position, Goksel said.

About 5,800 troops serve in the nine-nation UNIFIL force set up to oversee the withdrawal of Israel's 1978 invasion troops and to help the Lebanese government extend its authority to the Israeli border.

Its goals were thwarted by another Israeli invasion in 1982 and the increasing impotence of the Beirut government. Israel withdrew the bulk of its forces in 1985 but established the security zone and prevented UNIFIL from patrolling the border.

In Beirut, the Islamic Resistance — a coalition of pro-Iranian fundamentalists — said in a statement that Muslim guerrillas attacked SLA positions with rocket-propelled grenades, mortar bombs and machineguns.

Pro-Iranian and Palestinian guerrillas frequently attack Israeli and SLA targets in the zone, prompting Israeli retaliation.

On Monday, six Israeli jets bombed two positions of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) near the port city of Sidon, 40 kilometres south of Beirut, killing one person and wounding eight.

Lebanese Shiite militants and Israeli leaders both assailed UNIFIL but for opposite reasons.

Shiite militants say the force hinders their operations against Israel. Israel says UNIFIL — its role limited to peacekeeping rather than defence — has failed to halt the guerrillas.

3 Israeli experts' on rebel side wounded, Sudanese general says

KHARTOUM (AP) — Three "Israeli experts" have been reported wounded in southern Sudan's civil war zone, apparently while helping the rebels, a government general says.

He and a colleague also reported in newspaper articles a government claim that Israel and other countries including Cuba and South Africa are helping the rebels.

The generals said that the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has changed policy and now seeks to establish a breakaway southern state called the "Imatong socialist state."

An Ethiopia-based rebel spokesman denied his movement was getting aid from Israel or Cuba or was planning to establish a state in southern Sudan.

Maj.-Gen. Nassereddin Suleiman, commander of the sprawling Equatoria region, did not claim to have confirmation that Israelis had been wounded in the 7-year-old conflict.

But he told the official newspaper Al Injaz Al Watany that his command, based in Equatoria's capital Juba, received a report that "three Israeli experts were wounded in a landmine blast while inspecting a rebel camp in Equatoria."

In Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital, SPLA spokesman Lam Akol said: "We have not contemplated or anticipated any form of assistance from Israel. The Khartoum government always has tried to associate us with Israel in an attempt to isolate us from the Arab World." He spoke by telephone with the Associated Press in Nairobi, Kenya.

Interviewed in Juba, Suleiman said government troops saw "white mercenaries in the (rebel-held) Kajo-Kaje area" west of Juba and that his soldiers seized a Soviet-made T-55 tank, further evidence of foreign interference.

In Khartoum, the capital 1,200 kilometres north of Juba, a European diplomat who closely watch-

es military developments in Sudan said the report still does not prove the government's repeated claims of Israeli involvement.

"The government several times has accused Israel of helping the SPLA but never with concrete evidence," the diplomat said.

"We had not heard of these three wounded experts before, but since the report indicates that the rebels have them and not the government, again there is no proof."

On the rebel policy shift, Suleiman did not give his source for the alleged rebel decision to create a socialist state with its capital in Juba. The purported name chosen for the state refers to Equatoria's Imatong Mountains.

Renegade Army Col. John Garang, leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Army, asserts that he wants no secession but only better treatment for the non-Muslim south from the Muslim-dominated government in the north.

PLO warns of more attacks if Mideast peace deadlock continues

KUWAIT (AP) — A prominent Palestinian guerrilla leader was quoted Tuesday as warning of repetitions of acts such as the attack on an Israeli tour bus in Egypt by people frustrated over the deadlocked Middle East peace process, a Kuwaiti newspaper reported Tuesday.

Salah Khalaf, interviewed by the daily Al Anbaa in Tunis where the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is headquartered, also called for an end to differences between Syria and Iraq and Syria and the PLO to enable revival of an integrated eastern front against Israel.

Khalaf is second in command to the PLO leader Yasser Arafat in the mainstream Fatah guerrilla faction.

"If the (peace) deadlock continues in the Middle East, several

other similar operations will take place," Khalaf told the paper when asked to comment on the Feb. 4 attack on an Israeli tourist bus in Egypt in which nine were killed and 20 were wounded. Egypt is the only Arab country that has diplomatic ties with Israel.

The PLO renounced terrorism against Israel when it launched a peace initiative late 1988, for the first time also explicitly recognising the existence of the Jewish state.

But Khalaf, also known as Abu Iyad, pointed out that "other substitutes are emerging on the scene, who feel obliged to take a different line if the PLO exceeds its role."

"Israeli extremism will be faced with another extremism, be it Palestinian, Arab or Islamic.

Such extremism will not be satisfied with mere words to express itself," he said.

Khalaf said such extremists were now being armed and receive training, claiming that "Arab intelligence bodies" knew where the extremists were training in Arab countries and Iran.

The tour bus attack has been blamed on Palestinian Islamic extremists who are independent of the PLO.

"What is the PLO expected to do? Shall it act as a guard for Israel? Our role is not to search for those who stage operations against Israel. We can hardly control our people, how can we control others?" he asked.

Khalaf said the Soviet Jewish emigration to Israel, supported by the United States, brought "sweeping dangers."

Sharon stakes political ambitions on government collapse

By Jack Redden
Reuters

TEL AVIV — Hardliner Ariel Sharon has walked out of Israel's government after 13 often stormy years as a cabinet minister, staking his political future on the collapse of the ruling coalition.

The man who led the 1982 invasion of Lebanon formally resigned from the government Sunday to lead his campaign against moves toward Israeli-Palestinian talks — and to seek to become prime minister.

"I told the government 'goodbye and see you later'," Sharon, 61, told reporters.

"I am going to start a long march from town to town, to place to place, both in Israel and abroad," he said when pressed for his plans.

After fighting Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's cautious

moves toward negotiations from inside the government, Sharon, a hawk whose audacity has sometimes been termed recklessness, took the plunge into opposition in typically dramatic style.

His surprise announcement a week ago that he would resign turned a meeting of Shamir's Likud Party into chaos, presumably as intended.

Although he said his priority was preventing Israeli-Palestinian talks, the burly trade and industry minister told reporters Sunday he wanted to replace Shamir as Likud leader.

But so long as Israel's current broad coalition government remains intact he is unlikely to have an opportunity to challenge Shamir.

Shamir, 74, defeated Sharon in a 1984 leadership contest by a 58-42 per cent margin.

The 14-month-old broad coalition government he heads

shows no signs of imminent collapse despite periodic crises and threats by the dovish Labour Party to withdraw.

Labour is pressing again for Shamir to give a clearer commitment to Israeli-Palestinian talks.

But despite widespread criticism that it has failed to tackle either economic or political problems, the alliance of Shamir and Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin of the Labour Party appears to guarantee continued life for the coalition.

Sharon quit the government saying Israeli-Palestinian peace talks threaten the Jewish state.

"I don't remember as dangerous a situation as we are facing now," he told the news conference.

Shamir has proposed Palestinian elections in the occupied territories to choose representatives who would negotiate with Israel on limited self-rule.

Washington is trying to arrange an Israeli-Palestinian meeting in Cairo to prepare for such elections.

But Sharon said Israel should tell the Americans bluntly it is not interested. He said Shamir's moves towards negotiations threatened Israel's existence by questioning its hold over Arab Jeru-

salem and the West Bank and Gaza Strip, occupied in the 1967 Middle East war.

Sharon, who ruthlessly pacified the Gaza Strip in the 1970s and had promised to crush the 26-month-old Palestinian uprising if made defence minister again, repeated his view that Gaza refugee camps should be razed and the occupants resettled.

NEWS ANALYSIS

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led. But he said the West Bank and the Gaza Strip had to remain under Israeli control.

"It will be our right to be in charge of the security in Judea, Samaria (the West Bank) and Gaza," he added. "And that will be forever."

Sharon, who was not averse to sniping at Shamir when inside the cabinet, will be even more direct in his attacks now as he tries to build broader support inside Likud.

But his greatest handicap is not his hardline positions, widely shared by many Likud members, including Shamir.

He has to overcome suspicions that his real goal has little to do with policy and much to do with a thirst for power.

Storming out of government was in character but critics say such gestures are aimed mainly at publicity or glory.

In 1982 Sharon, then de-

fence minister, led an invasion of Lebanon that was initially described as a limited action to drive Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) guerrillas away from the Israeli border.

As the war developed into a siege of Beirut and a long, costly campaign, cabinet colleagues accused Sharon of misleading them about the aims of the invasion.

The public outcry in Israel eventually forced Sharon to resign as defence minister. But in a display of unrepentant self-confidence, he ignored demands for his departure and remained in the cabinet as minister without portfolio.

His resignation as trade minister took effect Tuesday but he remains Central Committee chairman in Likud where an outspoken minority appears to support his goal of replacing Shamir as leader.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS BRIEF

Earthquake hits Baghdad, western Iran

BAGHDAD (R) — An earthquake shook Baghdad Tuesday but caused no casualties, the Iraqi Seismological Centre reported. The quake, which measured four on the open-ended Richter Scale, struck at 9.10 a.m. (0610 GMT) and was centred 80 kilometres southeast of the Iraqi capital. Iran, meanwhile, reported that a tremor of equal strength jolted Islamabad-E Gharb near the Iraqi border Tuesday morning. The Iranian news agency IRNA, received in Cyprus, placed the centre of the quake 500 kilometres southwest of Tehran inside Iran's borders.

Libyans wounded in Landmine blast

NICOSIA (R) — Several Libyan security men were critically wounded when a World War II landmine exploded under their car west of Sirte, an official at the Libyan News Agency (JANA) said Tuesday. He said the security men were patrolling an area where fierce battles took place between the German Afrika Corps backed by Italian units and British "desert rats" more than 45 years ago. "The occupants of the car were critically wounded," the official said. Libya has repeatedly asked Italy and other World War II belligerents to hand over maps of millions of mines planted in its deserts during the war. "These mines have killed hundreds of innocent people and prevented them from exploiting their lands for agricultural or industrial purposes," the official said.

'Israelis committed to greater Israel'

DAMASCUS (R) — Israel's leaders from both sides of the political divide were determined to make permanent their occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, an official Syrian newspaper said Tuesday. "The Israelis want to evacuate Arabs... to settle Jewish immigrants," said the daily paper *Tahrir*. The paper said Israeli leaders, from Likud's hawklike Ariel Sharon who resigned from the cabinet in protest at Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's "soft" peace moves, to the dovish Labour Party leader Shimon Peres shared the same views towards Arab and Palestinian rights. "Greater Israel... remains a firm objective of all Israeli leaders," the paper said. "If some Arabs are betting on the possibility of an emergence of moderation in the Israeli position they are mistaken. Israel denies it has an official policy of setting Soviet and Eastern European Jews in the occupied territories. Many of the 50,000 to 100,000 expected to migrate to Israel this year are considered likely to move to the West Bank and Gaza."

Tunisia eases immigration procedures

TUNIS (R) — Tunisia has introduced streamlined passport control procedures at border posts and airports for citizens of the five-nation Arab Maghreb Union. The union, which groups Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia, aims eventually to become a single market with free movement of people and goods across its borders. The five countries have already abolished visas for citizens of the other member states. The union's Consultative Council (parliament), at a three-day meeting which ended in Tunis Monday, said the five states should abolish bureaucratic obstacles to free movement, speed up work on a Trans-Maghreb Highway and set up a single North African airline. Tunisian President Zine Abidine Ben Ali told the council Saturday the union's next summit in Algiers, in July, would look at plans to issue a standardised Maghreb identity card. He also promised to abolish a 45-dinar (\$50) exit tax for Tunisians travelling to one of the other four countries. Parliament must approve the change for it to take effect.

Iran hangs 30 for drug smuggling

NICOSIA (R) — Iran has hanged 30 people for smuggling drugs. The Iranian News Agency (IRNA) said the hangings were carried out in Tehran and nine other cities, but gave few other details. Drug traffickers are usually hanged in public unless the convicts are women. They are normally executed inside prison. It was the second group of smugglers reported executed in Iran this year. Thirty-one people, including four Afghans and three women, were hanged on Jan. 10. Iran executed more than 900 people for drug-related offences last year. Officials said 34 tonnes of drugs were seized and 277 trafficking rings smashed in the year to Jan. 20. IRNA, monitored in Cyprus, said some of those hanged Monday were also convicted of smuggling firearms and explosives and "collaborating with thugs."

Iran bans Newsweek

NICOSIA (R) — Iran said Monday it had banned an issue of Newsweek magazine carrying an interview with Salman Rushdie, who the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini said should be killed for insulting Islam. The Iranian News Agency (IRNA) reported the ban on Newsweek's Feb. 12 issue, in which the British author described how his life had changed since Khomeini's order. Iran's top judge Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi said Sunday the death decree was irreversible and must be enforced. Rushdie has been in hiding since it was issued a year ago this month.

OAU ministers begin talks in Ethiopia

ADDIS ABABA (AP) — African foreign ministers have begun talks in Ethiopia to assess possible effects of changes in Eastern Europe on the continent's economy and politics. President Mengistu Haile Mariam also said the ministers should evaluate the meaning to Africa of the relaxation of tension between the Soviet Union and United States. Ethiopian Vice President Fiseha Desta read Mengistu's statement at the opening session Monday of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) foreign ministers' five-day conference. Various African leaders have expressed concern that Western nations would abandon the continent and divert aid they previously gave Africans to Eastern Europe, where Communism is collapsing. Another item on the agenda is political changes in South Africa, where President F.W. de Klerk recently legalised the African National Congress and freed from prison Nelson Mandela, the best known of the liberation movement's leaders.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME ONE

15:30 Korna
15:40 Programme review
15:45 Children's programme
17:30 Educational programme
18:40 News summary in Arabic
18:45 Cairo news message
19:30 Local programme
20:30 News in Arabic
21:30 Arabic series
21:35 News in Hebrew
22:30 News in Arabic
23:40 Play "Petra"

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Documentary
19:00 News in French
19:15 Varieties
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:30 News in Arabic
21:30 The Nutt House
21:40 Natural World
22:00 News in English
22:30 The Final Run

PRAYER TIMES

06:51 Fajr
07:02 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:49 Asr
15:00 Maghreb
17:30 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swatish, Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
Dr. Le Saleh Church Tel. 661757
Terra Nova Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771351
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Assorted International Church Tel. 683326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811255
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 813817, 654922

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be partly cloudy with expected scattered showers in the southern and central regions of the Kingdom and winds will be northwesterly moderate.

In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.

Amman Min./Max. temp. 0/10

Aqaba 7/18

Deserts 2/11

Jordan Valley 2/17

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 13, Aqaba 22. Humidity readings: Amman 45 per cent, Aqaba 35 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mohammad Al Sawwa 732056
Dr. Abdul Hafez Al Khawaja 791594
Dr. Zein Zaghoul 638591
Dr. Othman Mustafa 774024
Painkillers pharmacy 778336
Al Asami pharmacy 637035
Nawroth pharmacy 623672
Al Solan pharmacy 636730
Yasuda pharmacy 644645
Smeical pharmacy 637660
BRID:
Dr. Ahmad Bishawi (—)
Al Shams pharmacy (982236)

ZARQA:
Dr. Akram Haddad (—)
Khalifa pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111
Rescue 630441
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 631111, 637777
Fire Brigade 637226
Blood Bank 732121
Highway Police 643402
Traffic Police 846390
Public Security Department 635321
Hotel Complaints 635303
Police Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdell Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 664174
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 615615
Electric Power

Company 63681
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813613/52
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 642816
Al-Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 642442
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Mallat, J. Amman 666140
Palestine Specialist 664174
Shamsi Hospital 669131
University Hospital 643945
Al-Musharraf Hospital 667221/9
The Islamic Ahdad 661717
Al-Ahli, Abdull 664164
Islamic, Al-Muhajreen 771013
Army, Mallat 661115
Queen Alia Hospital 6224020
Zarqa Hospital 674153
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)910771
The Sina Hospital (09)986732
BRID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)775555
Great Catholic Hospital (02)722725
Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital (02)747100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:10 Jeddah (RJ)
09:15 Amman (RJ)
11:20 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
11:30 Riyadh (RJ)
11:40 London (RJ)
12:40 Damascus (RJ)
13:30 Cairo (RJ)
13:45 Doha (RJ)
13:45 Kuwait, Doha (RJ)
13:45 Bahrain, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
14:00 Delhi (RJ)

Locally-made conveyor belt to handle exports

Jordan clinker shipment on way to the Philippines

By Ner Sadi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The first shipment of Jordanian clinker to the Philippines has left Aqaba Port in implementation of an agreement concluded by the Jordan Cement Factories Company (JCFC), according to a company statement Tuesday. The ship, "Pearl," is carrying 11,000 tonnes of cement to the Philippines, according to the statement.

Jordan will export 1.5 million tonnes of cement to countries in Southeast Asia, North and South America, South Korea and West Africa. JCFC held negotiations with several Southeast Asian, West African and American countries in November 1989 and concluded agreements with them, according to Wadie Al Sayegh, deputy director-general of the Cement Factory.

Sayegh told the Jordan Times in an earlier interview that according to the two agreements concluded, Jordan would export about one million tonnes of clinker to these countries. He did not give a breakdown of the exports to each country.

In order to better handle the increase of clinker export, the cement factory and the Aqaba Port Authority decided after a study that a conveyor belt was needed to load the clinker from trucks into ships for export.

Sayegh said, that if a belt was imported, it would have cost JD 500,000 "so we decided against buying the belt and instead looked into the possibility of manufacturing it locally."

He said that certain raw materials were needed to manufacture that belt, which was completed in 55 days, but declined to say what sort of materials went into the construction.

Sayegh said, however, that JD 2,865 worth of equipment was bought from the local market, around JD 8,878 worth of equipment was used from factory stocks and JD 30,000 worth of equipment was used from scraps at the factory, but again Sayegh declined any explanation what the scraps or stocks were. The project actually costs about JD 45,000.

Project engineer, Tahseen Al Shami, headed a team of 14 technical and mechanical engineers with "speed and efficiency," Sayegh said. They manufactured a conveyor belt with a loading capacity of 300 tonnes per hour, a length of 36 metres and a height of 15 metres.

Although the Pearl had arrived and left, the belt is not yet in Aqaba. "We are waiting for the port authority to tell us which berth to take the belt to," Shipping the belt to Aqaba entails a tedious process, for the factory would have to disassemble the belt and assemble it again in Aqaba, Sayegh said.

"We are very pleased with the conveyor belt. It is locally designed and now we can produce clinker for local and export markets," Sayegh said. "If all goes smoothly, we have intended to manufacture more conveyor belts and increase our exports," Sayegh added.



SIXTH GRADERS VISIT AL RA'I: A group of sixth grade students from the Amman Baccalaureate School, along with His Royal Highness Prince Rashid Al Hassan, (fourth from left), visited the Al Ra'i newspaper offices and press Tuesday. The visitors were briefed on how a newspaper is produced and what goes into it by Al Ra'i staff (Photo by Youssef Al 'Allan).

Ministry reinstates 26 more teachers

AMMAN (J.T.) — Another 26 male and female teachers dismissed from their jobs for political reasons and 18 women teachers whose applications were blocked on political grounds have now been re-employed by the Ministry of Education.

The announcement was made Tuesday by Minister of Education and Higher Education Mohammed Bannan, who last week announced the reinstatement of 26 other teachers dismissed on similar grounds.

Bannan said that he was making arrangements with the Civil Services Commission (CSC), which processes applications for work in government offices, to give priority to teachers dismissed for political reasons. So far the Ministry of Education has re-appointed 79 of the dismissed teachers out of 298 teachers dismissed from their posts, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The government decided earlier this month to reinstate all those who lost their jobs on political grounds.

Good Samaritans step forward to help meet Jordan's cornea needs

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein's concern over an eight-year-old child from Irbid in need of corneas and an appeal to the public made earlier this week by the director of the Eye Bank in Jordan seem to have paid off.

Reports from the Jordan News Agency, Petra, and the local press said a Jordanian expatriate living in West Germany had called Radio Jordan, which first reported about the boy, Jafar from Irbid, and the King's immediate response, and offered to arrange for his flight and accommodation in West Germany where a famous ophthalmologist would provide the corneas and carry out the operation free of charge.

The good Samaritan expatriate

is Dr. Butros Habib Al Tawil, who told Radio Jordan that he was now opening a special account at a West German bank to raise donation from Jordanian expatriates in West Germany to cover the cost of the operation and the boy's stay in West Germany.

King Hussein voiced appreciation to Tawil for his assistance and said he was willing to cover the cost of the boy's flight and accommodation, according to Petra.

Radio Jordan's call-in programme has received numerous telephone calls from Jordanians here and abroad offering financial help and their own corneas after death to the Jordan Eye Bank, which is housed at the

Price index on the rise, salaries remain frozen

AMMAN (Petra) — The price index in Jordan has been steadily rising while most wages and salaries remained frozen in the past year despite government efforts to deal with the situation, according to the Department of Statistics.

The department has prepared a statistical bulletin to be published shortly indicating a rise in the index the past year at an average rate of 33.8 per cent.

It said basic food commodities rose by 25 per cent, clothes and shoes by 77 per cent, housing by seven per cent, home appliances by 102 per cent, transport by 58 per cent, medical care by 41 per cent, recreation by 98 per cent.

The bulletin said that indications point to the fact that the trend of rising prices was continuing.

External, internal factors

Minister of Supply Nabil Abul Huda said in a statement that the rise in prices was due to external and internal causes.

The rise in the exchange rate of the European currencies over the

past few months was about 32 per cent; Jordan imports a great deal of products from Europe, the minister said.

He said another external factor for the increase was that European countries were gradually removing all subsidies on exports which leads to a further rise of prices of European goods including dairy products.

Abul Huda said that inaccurate statements and receipts by merchants about the cost of imported products resulted in higher costs.

"The Ministry of Supply is trying its best to control the situation and has cancelled earlier decisions in order to allow merchants to make profits up to 15 per cent," the minister said.

Ministry of Industry and Trade's Secretary-General Mohammed Saqqaf agreed with Abul Huda's assessment and said that his ministry was now revising prices of locally produced industrial goods in cooperation with the Amman Chamber of Industry. The Ministry of Industry and Trade was also maintaining and enhancing barter trade agreements between Jordan and other

countries to ensure the sale of various products at reasonable rates, Saqqaf said.

Two supply merchants Elia Nuqul and Mohammad Al Haj Deeb attributed the rise in prices to the high rate of foreign exchange against the Jordanian dinar, and also to the government-imposed duty on imported goods.

They said that the Customs Department charges a 15 per cent duty in tariffs and an additional 18 per cent on services.

Nazmi Al Abdullah, director of the Customs Duty Department, said that most basic foodstuffs including dried milk, wheat, and rice were exempted from duty and were imported by the Ministry of Supply. He said other commodities including meat, lentils, chick peas, maize, onions, garlic and potatoes were not charged any import duty except a five per cent value added tax. Duty imposed on various other imported foodstuffs were designed to protect local industries, Abdullah explained.

He said that duty on imported luxuries like chocolates reached up to 90 per cent.

Writers association congratulates Mandela

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordanian Writers Association (JWA) Tuesday sent a telegram to South African nationalist leader Nelson Mandela congratulating him on his release from prison after 27 years and expressing solidarity with the struggle of South African blacks.

In the telegram, signed by JWA President Abdul Rahim Omar, described Mandela as "the symbol of freedom, the giant of Africa," and drew parallels between the South African black struggle and the Palestinian struggle.

Following is the full text of the telegram, which was made available to the Jordan Times.

In the name of Jordanian writers we congratulate all freedom fighters, all free men and women and all honest people who look to you with all the support, love and pride in your heroic struggle and steadfastness.

The racial tyranny against your people for so many decades is also being practised by the rulers of Israel against Arabs in general and Palestinians in particular.

ACC radio stations to jointly cover summit

AMMAN (Petra) — The national radio stations of Jordan, Egypt, Iraq and North Yemen, the four countries of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC), will jointly cover the ACC summit sessions, which are scheduled to start here Saturday, Feb. 24, according to Radio Jordan Director Ibrahim Shabazzadeh.

Shabazzadeh made the statement at the conclusion of meetings by directors of radio stations in the four countries to plan future cooperation and to coordinate efforts in covering the deliberations of the coming summit.

The directors of the four stations: Hilmi 'Al Ballak from Egypt, Ahmad Noubi of North Yemen and Hareth Abboud of Iraq and Shabazzadeh signed minutes of the talks at the final session, Shabazzadeh said.

He told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the four directors reached agreement on broadcasting joint 60-minute weekly variety programmes during the coming month of Ramadan.

He said that the programmes,

to be produced jointly by the four countries and broadcast in the morning through dusk at the end of the day's fast, will cover Arab World affairs and Islamic topics.

According to Shabazzadeh, agreement was also reached for the exchange of radio announcers and programme production and on facilities to be given by each of the four stations to one another and on exchanging religious sermons featuring historic events. In addition, he said, the four stations would make a joint inventory sheet on their programmes and will exchange weekly news materials highlighting the ACC's major activities as well as technical, scientific and sports events in the four countries.

Following the final session, Minister of Information Ibrahim Izzeddin met with the four directors to review the agreements. Izzeddin urged the four stations to give ample attention to training of staff and to encouraging news exchange and radio programmes and to coordinate future cooperation.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

SSC to finance JPA housing project

AMMAN (Petra) — Social Security Corporation (SSC) Director General Mahdi Al Farhan Tuesday held talks with Jordanian Press Association (JPA) President Hashem Khreisat and JPA board members on issues pertaining to financing a JPA housing project. Farhan and the JPA delegation agreed in principle to supply the corporation with the association's statute, law and the housing project's plans. Farhan voiced the corporation's readiness to provide all necessary facilities to the project. The association's administrative committee will hold an extraordinary meeting Thursday to work out the details of the project and to ensure that all documents requested are presented to the corporation.

Solar energy talks review 4 papers

AMMAN (Petra) — The first international conference on the use of solar energy in combatting soil diseases Tuesday discussed four working papers. The first paper dealt with the physical effects of using solar energy in sterilising the soil while the second and the third discussed the effects of solar disinfection of pesticides and bacteria, and the fourth dealt with the effects of solar disinfection on harmful herbs. The conference is organised by the University of Jordan in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organisation and the Ministry of Agriculture.

Physicians to attend Cairo conference

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian medical team headed by the president of the Arab Heart Surgeons Association (AHS), left for Cairo Tuesday to take part in a three-day conference organised by the AHS in cooperation with the Egyptian Heart Surgeons Society. The Jordanian delegation will present three working papers on heart transplantation in Jordan, congenital diseases and a catheterisation. Talking part in the conference will be heart surgeons from the Arab World, the United States, West Germany and the United Kingdom.

'Oldest' man dies at 130

AMMAN (J.T.) — Haj Mu'in Ibrahim Abu Dalboun, who is alleged to have been the oldest man in Jordan, has died in Jerash at the age of 130 years. According to his son Abdul Latif, his father had been working in livestock trade and agriculture until his death. He said his father was moving continuously between Jerash and his birthplace, the village of Al Kfeir, on foot and that he never took a bus or a taxi during his regular travel from his village to Jerash. He added that his father never visited a doctor, except one week before his death when he fell sick.

Refinery reports higher sales

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company achieved an increase of two per cent in its sales of oil products during January, compared with the same month last year. The company's sales jumped from 283,130 tonnes in January 1989 to 290,074 tonnes last month an increase of 6,944 tonnes in its gross sales.

Preparations under way for pollution workshop

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Environmental Research Centre of the Royal Scientific Society is organising a regional workshop on air pollution.

The objectives of the workshop, scheduled to be held Feb 26-28, are to review the activities and research efforts undertaken by the developing countries in the field of air pollution and to discuss and analyse methods and procedures to be followed when setting national air pollution standards, according to its organisers.

The workshop also aims at increasing the awareness of the importance of air pollution control in a global frame. Selected Arab and foreign experts will participate in the workshop in addition to selected staff of Arab universities and research centres, staff of companies, agencies, regional and international institutions and ministries concerned with protecting the environment, a press release issued by the organisers said.

The workshop is co-sponsored by the Higher Council for Science and Technology, the International Development Research Centre, the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for West Asia and the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation.

The Environmental Research Centre has conducted a study supported by the International Development Research Centre-Canada to determine air pollution sources, types and degree in Amman which lasted for three years since 1986.

International fair displays wide array of Arabic books

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — An ideal entertainment centre for many book lovers was inaugurated by Minister of Information Ibrahim Izzeddin Tuesday; it promised an array of Arabic books on Islam, philosophy, psychology and an impressive selection of children's books.

The second Amman international book fair, held at the Universal Auto Centre (near the University of Jordan), displays a good range of English academic books, medical dictionaries and computer instruction books.

The 10-day book fair has on show publications of close to 150 publishing houses from Jordan,

Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kuwait, Iraq, Qatar, Tunisia, Libya, England, the United States, Turkey, Cyprus, Switzerland, the Soviet Union and West Germany.

But although the number of publishing houses participating in the book fair is very impressive, many visitors to the book fair said they had expected a larger selection of topics, especially contemporary political books and novels.

"I expected to find more English and French books, especially that these types of books are usually missing in the local market," said a young female visitor.

A few publishing houses have

set up kiosks at the fair but there were no books on the shelves Tuesday. "Over books arrived in a truck which also carried glass and toys so they are still held by the customs until an added fee is determined," a representative of Al Dawa Publishing House in Egypt explained to the Jordan Times.

A dictionary which drew special attention was an illustrated "Arab Child Dictionary" in Arabic, English and French published by the Ghassan House for Publishing and Distribution.

Dictionaries were a special attraction for visitors to a special kiosk by Longmans which had on show several aides to English writing and understanding.

Petra Bank dispute remains stalemated

(Continued from page 1)

Anani denied at Tuesday's press conference that he had said such a thing, and explained that he had told the president of the JBIEA that there was one employee who had signed irregular documents. "But I was talking about one employee not all," Anani commented, adding that what he said was completely "twisted" and relayed to the employees.

At the sit-in, employees carried banners, some of which were pre-printed by supportive associations and institutions, demanding that "slander" against the bank must stop, and praising the unity of all employees in their "struggle for our just rights." The banners said that the protest would continue until their demands were met.

Another employee said that the current management must bear the responsibility for "the destruction of the bank along with others who were involved in corruption under the previous management."

She added that any decision government officials might take to

liquidate the bank was unacceptable, "and His Majesty King Hussein would not accept that 3,000 people who depend on this bank be on the streets. It is up to the King to make decisions for the bank."

"If the management had any dignity, they would resign. We want an honest and clean management that truly has the best interest of the bank in mind, and we swear we will work whole-heartedly to make it the best bank, because no one cares about this national institution as much as we employees do," said another outspoken female employee.

Several Lower House deputies from the Democratic Bloc were present at the sit-in to express solidarity with the employees.

Issa Madanat, a deputy from Karak, told the Jordan Times that the employees had every right to protest in this manner because they had tried all means to achieve their rights with the management to no avail.

"All the employees are extremely protective of their institution,

but they are suffering as a result of problems created by the previous management. Unfortunately, the new management is not any better and has done nothing to alleviate these problems," according to Madanat.

JBIEA President Haidar Rashid, who was present during the sit-in which began at 8 in the morning and lasted until 2:30 p.m., said the association had sent messages to King Hussein and the prime minister to intervene and bringing to account all "corrupt forces" of the previous and present management of the bank and clear the name of the bank.

The association also called on all employees in every bank in the capital to join the Petra Bank employees in their protest against the management committee Wednesday after their working hours at 2 p.m. Rashid said he expected a large number to show up, considering that many banks, institutions and professional and labour unions Tuesday sent messages of solidarity with the Petra Bank employees in their protest.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ An exhibition of photos of plays directed by Cherami, Mesgouich, Mmouchkine, Planchon and others, at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ An exhibition of paintings by Alla Ammouara, Nabila Hilmi and Nawal Abdoufah at Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation (10 a.m. - 5 p.m.).
- ★ A photography exhibition by Samer Al Tai at the Yarmouk University.
- ★ An exhibition of stamp collection of the Arab Cooperation Council countries at Jordan Electricity Authority.
- ★ An Iraqi book exhibition at the Mu'ta University.
- ★ An exhibition entitled "Twenty years of French contribution to studying Syrian archaeology" at the Institute of Archaeology and Archaeology at Yarmouk University.
- ★ An exhibition entitled "Models of the Jordanian plastic art" at the Soviet Cultural Centre.
- ★ A photographic exhibition on the Soviet armed forces at the Soviet Cultural Centre.

FILM

- ★ A French film entitled "Le Lien du Crise" at the French Cultural Centre — 8:00 p.m.

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Jordan Times

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Arab self-reliance — the name of the game

SEVERAL Members of Parliament raised the need to reactivate the Eastern Front during last week's deliberations. Their call for bolstering Arab defences came in the wake of the impending Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel and the disclosure that the peace process in the Middle East has reached a dead end. There was also a parallel recognition by those parliamentarians that Syrian-Iraqi relations need to be not only restored but also developed into a truly brotherly path before this aspired goal of reactivating the Eastern Front can take full shape and substance. In other words, this missing link in Arab relations needs to be redressed if Arab defences are to reach the level and degree of cooperation and coordination necessary to face the new Israeli threats. One does not have to be an expert in geopolitical strategies to realise that only when Arab defences are adequate there would be a real hope for regaining Arab territories over the negotiating table or otherwise. And as long as the Eastern Front is in disarray, there is not much hope for the ongoing peace process to come to fruition. The projected Arab summit will be an ample opportunity to address this aspect of inter-Arab relations and hopefully the concerned Arab countries will realise then and there that they can no longer afford the luxury of maintaining Arab animosities in the face of the growing Israeli threats and the changes that are occurring in the axis of power on the international arena. With this assessment in mind, Jordan has left no stone unturned in order to affect and realise harmonious relations between Baghdad and Damascus. And it is no accident that Israel's initial reaction to the recent calls for the reactivation of the Eastern Front has been one of concern and anxiety. To be sure, the breathing of new life into the defunct Eastern Front would have more than Israel in mind. The need to start a nucleus of joint Arab action has become all the more pressing in the face of the many changes occurring on the international arena, especially between the East and the West. With the new regrouping of powers in the world, the Arab World has become vulnerable to intimidation and threats more than ever. Self-reliance by the Arab Nation has got to be the name of the new game. Otherwise, the designs on the Arab countries would reach unmanageable proportions. In this vein, the Arab Cooperation Council member states are best positioned to take the early initiative in forging a common defence strategy that could serve as the nucleus for a greater and broader Arab defence strategy encompassing the entire Eastern Front countries. Fortunately, two Arab summits are now in the cards: one on the ACC level and another on the Arab League scale. Hopefully, the two venues would provide the necessary fora for the elaboration of this common Arab defence strategy.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily on Tuesday focused attention on a statement by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in which she criticised all attempts to uproot the Palestinian Arabs from their homes and lands for the sake of settling new Jewish immigrants in their place. The paper said that the British premier displayed her total resentment of this idea describing it as a real aggression on and violation of all human rights. Thatcher's views contrast sharply with those of the United States which has been condoning Israel's aggression on the Arabs and supporting Israel's perpetual occupation of Arab lands, the paper noted. The United States for its part continues the drive to help Israel to build settlements and to absorb Jewish immigrants at the expense of Palestinian lands and rights, the paper added. We had hoped that Thatcher's stand would be copied by all the other members of the European Community in their dealings with the Middle East situation, the paper said. It said that the Arabs want all the Europeans to support the concept of swapping land for peace and a halt for all Israeli atrocities in the occupied Arab lands. The Arabs do not want the Europeans to remain prisoners of injustice done to the Jews by the Nazis and they do not want the Europeans to remain impervious to the Israeli criminal action leaving the Arab states to have a free hand in dealing with the situation in the Middle East area, the paper added. The Arabs, the paper concluded, do not wish to see the Americans having a free hand providing the Israelis with all sorts of assistance to maintain their occupation of Arab lands.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily tackles the question of official telephones installed at the homes of senior officials. Salah Abu Samad says the practice of granting such officials free telephones, obviously for official business, is costing the country a fortune. It is true that certain officials need to be contacted after office hours in view of the nature of their work and the urgency of the business, but these are only very few and not as many as those now enjoying the bliss of having official telephones installed in their homes, the paper continued. It said that the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment has already installed all official telephones even those installed at senior homes with a view to having unnecessary expenses. All other government departments, the writer said, should follow the example of this ministry which has indeed saved a lot of money for the treasury by its wise action.

Commenting on the continued Soviet Jewish influx into occupied Palestine Sawt Al Shaab daily said that all official Arab information services have been tackling the issue with articles attacking this hostile move. This attack has specially gained momentum in view of Shamir's declaration of his intention to create a greater Israel benefiting from this great influx. As long as all Arabs are agreed that the Soviet Jewish immigration constitutes a grave danger to the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular, then one can reasonably assume that a joint and collective action ought to be taken, the paper continued. It said it is now clear that the Soviet Union and the United States are playing a dirty game on the Arabs and the Arabs have no alternative but to confront this serious situation with one accord and one united stand.

Economic Forum

Floating interest rates: Premature but compulsory

By Dr. Abdalla Malki

THE full-fledged floatation of interest rates began on Feb. 3, 1990. That step was taken after extensive consultations between the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) on the one hand and commercial banks and finance companies on the other. Actually, a draft of the memorandum of CBJ decreasing floatation had been distributed to banks two months earlier and was refined in the light of the bankers' remarks. However, the tactics rather than the substance were the subject of consultation. These included various scenarios on the possible voluntary adoption of minimum rates on deposits and the impact of this on the costs of funds. And the whole thing was largely a formality because interest rates were practically floated almost a year ago except that floatation of interest on loans took the form of a 9 per cent ceiling and a freely determined commission charge, a combination designed to get round the old Ottoman ordinance which outlawed interest rates higher than 9 per cent.

The IMF connection

There is no question that this floatation was one of the dictates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Independently of the so-called economic adjustment programme, the IMF has tirelessly for years preached Jordan to float interest rates, together with other "liberal" measures such as the devaluation of the Jordanian dinar. Under the accord of Jordan with IMF, the floatation became a must. Now it is left to the wise men in Jordan to labour in order to minimise the "blessings" said to be entailed in this floatation at a time when they had hardly gotten away with the remedying of the destructive results of the dinar's devaluation which was another "must" in itself.

LDCs: Special case

Being one manifestation of the interplay of market forces, floating interest rates should, in theory at least, be welcome. But this theorisation is tailored to the sophisticated markets of developed countries. Its premature injection into the highly imperfect markets of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) could be counter productive. Failure to allow for that could lead to jumps in the dark.

In LDCs, monetisation of the economy has not gone far enough. Liquidity preference is strong and self-finance is characteristic of great many businesses, especially in commerce. Information is not sufficiently permeated and loans are sometimes acquired interest-free from relatives, friends and neighbours. This phenomenon is magnified in Islamic societies where interest is sometimes equated with usury. For all these reasons, demand for credit is hardly a function of interest rates which therefore fail to be a good allocator of funds. Thus floating rates effect on resource allocation in LDCs will be different from the pattern that prevails in developed countries, portrayed in textbooks, preached by the IMF and finally marketed in replication by enthusiastic disciples of market forces.

Sarcastic assumptions

There is a host of naive arguments about the virtues of freely wavering interest rates in a country like Jordan. One argument claims it will check capital flight. This is ridiculous if only because it assumes that capital flight has been triggered by low interest rates on dinar deposits. A different version of this argument goes

even as far as saying that higher interest rates will serve to convert dollar deposits into dinar deposits as if the interest differential were the decisive factor which ignited the movement of funds to dollar deposits in the first place, let alone the implicit assumption that floatation leads necessarily to higher rates.

A more naive viewpoint maintains that floating rates will boost savings. This is a grossly wrong notion because interest rates determine the allocation of already generated savings to competing investments (deposits, stocks, bonds etc.) but they do not create them initially. That creation is the task of other forces (income levels, life cycle, permanent income).

The all-purpose argument

Another argument is the classical one which holds that floating interest rates improves the allocation of funds in behalf of efficient enterprises. This is a superficially good argument very commonly used, or abused, in the context of primitive economic analysis because it is so ambiguous as to mean anything, if necessary, and also so non-specific and non-committing as to mean nothing, if necessary as well. Efficient enterprises can defeat inefficient ones, drive them out of market and/or win scarce resources under floating and unfloating interest rate systems and they do that whether interest rates are at the level of 7 per cent or 15 per cent. Besides, interest forms only a fraction of production costs. Only a fraction of that fraction will be due to floatation of interest rates and is certainly not good to build a policy, if not a theory, on it.

Floating bids rates up

Apparently, the implicit assumption in the above arguments must be that floating brings about higher rates, because otherwise they crumble. However, this assumption has turned out to be true in the case of Jordan but it is not the norm. Where we start from a low rate base, as we did in Jordan, floating forces rates upwards. It has raised interest by an average of 2 per cent on deposits and 3 per cent on loans.

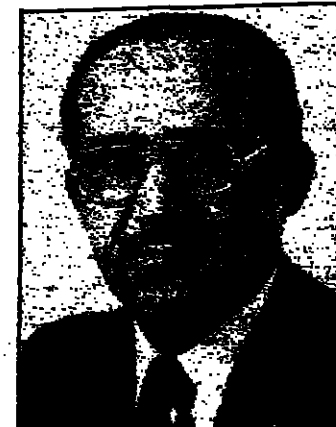
It is not commendable to rush to conclusions in such a short period of time. The Feb. 3 floatation of interest rates has not worked itself completely through the economy and any potential rise in rates will not show up in the short run. It is my conviction that floatation will push rates higher and higher in the medium and long run if it is a genuine one. And this is a big "if". Actually the CBJ is working hard to check any undesirable rises in interest on loans, through moral suasion not market intervention, and banks are co-operating with the CBJ to that end. But, can that last?

Shortcomings of floating rates

The main objection of floating rates in LDCs stems from the absence of a dependable (market) mechanism to steer rates up and down, in line with the business cycle and the socio-economic requirements of the country. Any developing country can easily unleash interest rates but then the question is whether it can harness them thereafter.

In advanced countries, such a mechanism is existent. This is why one can say that in practical terms there is nothing such as floating rates; they are controlled either directly by decrees (in most LDCs) or indirectly through market intervention and policy

Dr. Abdalla Malki is the general manager of the Association of Banks in Jordan — a job he has held since 1981. He is also editor of "Banks in Jordan" magazine. He has written extensively on economic issues in Jordanian newspapers and magazines. Today he writes his first weekly column in the Jordan Times. The column will appear every Wednesday.



announcements (in advanced countries).

Another shortcoming is that floating rates add to costs. This hits industries and low-income borrowers. One question is whether the social fabric, let alone the production system, can tolerate rising interest rates, especially on housing loans and when it might crack under the pressure of soaring rates. This aspect becomes more critical if we are after achieving real interest rates. And this must be our goal because the system of floating interest rates does not work without it. (Remember the alleged virtues of floating pre-mentioned earlier). And because demand for credit is not sensitive to interest rates in LDCs, interest rates rises tend to fan the flames of inflation.

Not only that. The classic notion maintains that higher interest rates combat inflation because they push up costs and thus curtail demand for credit. In at least as far as demand for consumption purposes is concerned, the devaluation of the dinar has sent costs, and thereby prices, skyhigh; high indeed to the extent that there is no room left for any price rises which can be demand-curtailling such as those emanating from higher interest rates. In other words, all curtailable demand has already been nipped out.

Public outcry

To conclude, floating of interest rates serves mainly the interests of banks thanks to the bargaining power edge they have. Thus the authorities have to step in so as to protect bank customers, stem the burst of public outcry and deal with a stream of justified and unjustified complaints against banks and high interest rates. The commercial banking sector stands to be the main beneficiary of floating rates although some small banks might suffer.

It is futile to make a fuss about floating, now and as long as our commitments under the IMF accord are there. The question to be pondered is whether the damage inflicted by floating rates will be reversible once that accord is terminated and how to minimise such damage. It is noteworthy that the amendment to CBJ law which legalised floating was deliberately worded as to allow for its abolishing at any time. Of course I, for one, hope that the system of floating interest rates will work against all odds. I know I am not alone. I had the same hope when the Jordanian dinar was floated (devalued). But sadly enough, that was a tragically frustrated hope because, as you all know, devaluation has not worked. Will we be more lucky this time?

Irish ambassador: Ireland aware of strong EC-Arab ties

As Ireland assumed the EC presidency at the beginning of this year, the Irish ambassador to Jordan, Antoin Macauley, who is based in Baghdad, contributed to the EC Newsletter the following statement on his government's programme during its six-month term.

IRELAND assumes the presidency of the European Community for the six months beginning on Jan. 1, 1990 against a background of historic change in the Community and in Europe as a whole. It is as the Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Charles J. Haughey has said, "a time of new hope for all Europeans, East and West. Momentous events are taking place daily. The ideological walls that kept the people apart are crumbling as surely as the Berlin Wall. Patterns which had been fixed for two generations since the World War II are shifting and changing with almost unbelievable rapidity."

The scale and scope of these changes present the Community with an enormous challenge which must be faced with courage and vision. The Community's response to this challenge will be of crucial importance, not just to the Community itself and to Eastern Europe but also to other countries throughout the world. At Strasbourg on Dec. 8 and 9, 1989, under the presidency of France, the Community decided the broad lines of its response, namely to proceed with its policies of greater unity and integration and also to support the heroic efforts of the people of Eastern Europe to build for themselves a new society on the sound principles of democracy, individual freedom and the rule of law.

The focus of the Irish presidency will be, therefore, (i) to continue to make progress towards the completion of the internal market by further reducing the obstacles to com-

plete freedom of competition in the supply of goods and services throughout the twelve member states of the Community;

(ii) to advance the preparations for economic and monetary union. Such a union is a logical complement to the development of a single market. It, too, must be pursued rigorously through policies designed to create conditions of stability and to facilitate economic growth;

(iii) to promote the adoption of forward-looking policies and measures to support the peoples of Eastern Europe in their efforts to achieve democratic freedom including, in particular, the commencement of negotiations on the setting up of an European bank for reconstruction and development.

Although it is natural that the dramatic developments in Eastern Europe should attract the attention of the European Community at present, it should be clear that

this attention will not be at the expense of relations with other areas of the world. The Irish presidency is keenly aware of the strong and close links which bind the Community to the Arab World.

The Twelve have consistently called for a comprehensive and peaceful settlement to the Israeli-Arab conflict, and the position of the Twelve is clearly set out in the Madrid declaration, which was reiterated at the European Council meeting in Strasbourg. As president, Ireland will do its utmost to make progress towards a peace settlement.

The Twelve welcome the efforts currently under way to launch a first-ever Israeli-Palestinian dialogue as a step on the path to peace.

Only through discussion between the parties directly involved will there be a resolution of this problem. And, in the Twelve's view, it is only through an international peace conference

under U.N. auspices with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the PLO, that a just and lasting settlement can be reached.

Ireland is also gravely concerned at the continuing abuses of human rights in the occupied territories, which are not only deplored for their own sake, but also because they cause attitudes to harden and are not conducive to a peaceful solution. Sadly, on Jan. 14 the Twelve had to make representations yet again to the Israeli authorities on their violent suppression of demonstrations.

In their demarche, they again recalled the importance for Israel's relations with the Twelve of full respect for the human rights of Palestinians in the occupied territories.

As president, Ireland will facilitate the implementation of the increased Community aid to the Palestinian people announced by the European Council, thereby contributing to their economic

and social development.

The Euro-Arab ministerial conference, which was held in Paris on Dec. 22, gave a welcome boost to the Twelve's relations with the whole of the Arab World and successfully relaunched and restructured the Euro-Arab dialogue. Ireland looks forward to holding, under the new structures, the next meeting of the general committee of the dialogue in Dublin during our presidency, when we hope to see the adoption of a number of practical projects of mutual benefit.

It is clear that, internally and externally, the next six months pose many challenges to the Community. The Irish presidency faces those challenges with confidence, relying on the spirit of compromise and the sense of common endeavour which are the hallmark of our partners in the development of the Community to date — Newsletter for EC in Jordan.

Nelson Mandela describes prison brutalities

By Rich Mkhondo
Reuters

SOWETO, South Africa — Freed black nationalist leader Nelson Mandela, describing brutalities he and other prisoners suffered during his 27 years in jail, said the treatment could have broken many men.

"The acts of brutality were too numerous for me to specify. Some of them could have broken many good men," he told journalists outside his Soweto home at the weekend.

likely to get more respect than he would if he capitulated," Mandela added.

"On the very first day that I arrived on Robben Island prison, we were marching from the quarry at the rate at which we felt was a dignified way of walking."

"The deputy commissioner of the prison resented that. He ordered us to run. We refused. Some people were assaulted, others were charged."

"They took us to a cell filled with water and smashed us. The search consisted of taking off our clothes, searching them, and throwing them into the water."

"We did not know what to do because the cell was wet, our clothes were wet. We had violent exchanges with the warders, that was all we could do."

Mandela and nine others spent nearly two decades on Robben Island, a penal colony in the Atlantic Ocean off Cape Town. He was forced to break rocks in a quarry for about 12 years.

"If something happened outside, like political demonstrations against the government, they would immediately take it out on us."

In 1982 Mandela and the others, including his closest comrade Walter Sisulu, were transferred to Pollsmoor prison outside Cape Town. After he was admitted to hospital in August 1988 for tuberculosis, Mandela was kept in a prison bungalow near Paarl. Most of his colleagues were



released last October but Mandela was not freed until February 11, a few days after South African President F.W. de Klerk lifted the ban on the ANC and other dissident groups.

'Very close friends'

In a separate interview Mandel-

la said that the three men charged with guarding him during his final years of imprisonment in a South African jail had become his "very close friends."

Mandela told Time magazine in its February 26 issue that his prison "sacrifice" had not been in vain.

"It is an achievement for a man to do his duty on earth irrespective of the consequences," Mandela said.

He said he would meet again with his three jailers at Victor Verster prison farm, where he was held during the final leg of his imprisonment.

"I got on very well with all of them," Mandela said. "We became very close friends."

Mandela identified the three guards as Major Marais, who he said was in charge of the prison farm, Warrant Officer Gregory and Warrant Officer Swart.

The black leader said that "from seven in the morning to four in the afternoon," he had virtually lived with Swart in a house on the prison farm.

During Mandela's early years of imprisonment and forced labour on Robben Island he and other ANC officials had slept in tiny one-man stone cells lit only by a 40-watt bulb and furnished with a bed roll and mat.

Mandela told Time that although these early prison experiences had been "very hard" he was never brutally assaulted, although many of his colleagues were.

Mandela was also asked how seriously he took reports of threats against his life.

"There is no threat whatsoever from the so-called radical left," Mandela said. "The only threat can be from the right wing."

He added that he was not concerned about possible violence against him because "my people will protect me."

Mandela was asked when South Africa's blacks would be free.

"I am no prophet," Mandela replied. "I cannot say."

OUT OF LINE

Who is complaining?

By Adnan Agil Saad

Adnan Agil Saad's light-hearted column will appear in this space every Wednesday.

THE other day, I was visiting a friend who is into everything: construction, import-export, distribution, consultancy services, you name it, he has it. I found him in a state of agitation over the recent move by the Labour Ministry to freeze issuance of work permits to non-Jordanians. "I am about to be ruined," he lamented, reaching across the table for a glass of water to swallow a couple of obnoxious-looking pills. "See, I am about to have a stroke," he said. "If I have to rely on Jordanians to look after my business, I might as well pack up and leave."

Take it easy, I said, trying to soothe him. After all, the day will come sooner or later when he will have no choice but to employ Jordanians. "But, do you know how much I have invested in my business?" he countered. I said I didn't have the least idea. Never mind, he said, but the point is that he has come to depend on non-Jordanians to run an efficient organisation. "Some of them have been with me for over 10 years, and if I have to fire them now I will have to start all over again," he appeared to be on the verge of tears.

But then, I reminded him, he should have picked up and trained Jordanians on the first place. Oh no, he said. "Who would agree to work 12 to 14 hours a day, except to share a room with three others, call in sick once every year, and not have laws and regulations in my face at every given chance?"

I made some sympathetic noises and inquired what he planned to do to get out of his dilemma. "To be honest, I do not know," he replied. "For example, I have this man from the Far East. He drafts and types all my business letters, sends all my telegrams and facsimiles, handles the word processor like a baby, keeps an inventory of my food distribution company, knows when to order stock, goes to the bank, fills my visa applications and maintains my American Express accounts. He is in the office at 8 in the morning and I give him a \$5 to the service and at 5 in the evening when he is not updating the files. Now, tell me how many Jordanians do I need to replace him?"

Five from the first look, unless he opts for a super robot, I told him. "Well, that's what I am trying to tell you. If I lose him, then I am in real trouble," he pondered the table.

How much does he pay the man? I inquired. "That's not the point," he said, trying to evade the question. But, I pressed, he should be paying him at least JD 1,000 a month. "Am I crazy?" he got agitated again. "I give him 175 dinars and a place to sleep; and he pays half of the JD 300 work permit fee, and gets a ticket home and back every three years."

That's not fair, I pointed out. "Well, he is not complaining. And if he doesn't like it he can leave on the next plane. I bet he won't get half the salary at home."

Well then, if the man is so easily disposable with, why the anger? I could not help but ask.

"Will you please leave me alone to sort out my problems on my own?" came the quick retort.

On my way out I almost collided with an oriental-looking man carrying a tea tray in one hand and a bunch of papers in the other. No doubt, he was the employee in question. But my friend apparently forgot to tell me about his tea-making skills.

Arab cartoonists cultivate humour despite restrictions

By Fouad Hamdan

MANAMA (DPA) — "The Arab World is probably the one area in the world that needs cartoonists the most," the editor-in-chief of the weekly *Al-Majalla* said recently.

Abdul Rahman Al Rashed added, "if it is true that satire springs from the womb of adversity, then we may regard the whole Arab region as a vast gallery and every Arab a caricaturist."

Al Majalla which publishes drawings by well-known Lebanese cartoonist Mahmud Kahlil, sponsored an exhibition in Bahrain recently displaying caricatures from many Arab states.

Their drawings depict human rights abuses, censorship, poverty, social injustice and the suffering of the Palestinian people.

In one cartoon, Raed Alawi from Iraq shows a general marching on a globe and ruthlessly destroying nature with a lawnmower shaped like a tank.

Cartoons by Mohammed Al Khunifir, a Saudi free lancer portray the situation of women in society.

"Cartoonists manage to impose their opinion," said Othman Al

Omar, editor-in-chief of the *Asharq Al Awsat*. "They have a much wider range expression than journalists."

Many caricaturists privately voice frustration with limits set on their works, which lead to self-imposed censorship. They point out that they must not make fun of leaders, and topics like religious activism are taboo.

"I can sometimes describe the effects of a policy, but not the man behind it. The problem is that modern Arab mentality does not tolerate sharp criticism," one caricaturist said on condition of anonymity.

"I am careful because even our society cannot accept cheeky cartoons. I have no illusions that I'm in Europe," he added. "It is a miracle that I haven't yet lost my sense of humour."

The first modern Arab caricaturist was Egyptian Yaqub Sami, who was active in Cairo in the second half of the 19th century.

His satire magazine *Al-Nazara* Zayza', the first in the Arab World, was shut down by the British because it attacked their colonial rule, social injustice and polygamy.

The first generation of Arab cartoonists came from Egypt, a

people famous in the Arab World for their sense of humour, and their works dealt with the situation in their country.

Today, almost every Arab newspaper and magazine has at least one cartoonist on its staff. And their themes are pan-Arab, that is, the Palestinian cause, the war in Lebanon, human rights and other topics.

Perhaps the best-known modern Arab caricaturist was Naji Al Ali, a Palestinian who grew up in a Lebanese refugee camp. He influenced others like Khaled Al Hashemi in Bahrain, an architect who publishes his cartoons in the Manama-based daily *Al Ayam*.

"Naji's cartoons were sad but not pessimistic. He represented a people who lost their homeland. His cartoons were for Palestine," Al Hashemi told DPA. "His sadness was provocative. It had a positive message and it showed new perspectives."

Al Hashemi added, "a cartoon should depict reality and be understood by everybody. Its message should be alive and relevant even years later," he said. "And Naji could do it."

In his cartoons for the London-based Kuwaiti daily *Al Qabas*, Al Ali used the figure of a body he



named "Hanzhala," the Arabic name for a bitter desert plant.

"Hanzhala was born out of bitterness in the diaspora," he once said. Criticised for his drawings, he replied: "My people

and I have enough problems, and my cartoons are no jokes."

Naji Al Ali was shot dead in London in 1987. Authorities later deported an Israeli diplomat, described by British press reports as

an Israeli intelligence service (Mossad) agent who was behind the murder.

Naji Al Ali was the first Arab caricaturist killed for his political opinions.

1990 — European Year of Tourism

How 3rd world can attract more tourists

By Dr. Karl Wolfgang Menck

One of the topics covered by the International Tourism Exchange ITB Berlin 1990, taking place on the Berlin Exhibition Grounds and in the ICC Berlin from March 3 to 8, will be the European Year of Tourism, and the measures being undertaken to create a single European market. In the following report Dr. Karl Menck of the Institute for Economic Research (IHW), Hamburg, examines the measures that should be undertaken by developing countries in order to retain their competitiveness.

THE aim of the European Year of Tourism in 1990 is to give additional and lasting impetus to tourism in the European Community.

In addition tourism can be expected to benefit from the measures being taken by the Community in preparation for the creation of the single European market by 1992. No matter how the announcements by the Community may be implemented, third countries are advised to pay close attention to such initiatives. This applies in particular to those developing countries whose economic strength lags behind that of the Community, and which, in the tourism sector, have a substantial pent up demand in comparison with the industrialised nations.

This year the Community intends to set up its promotional efforts, especially in North America and Japan. The aim is to correct the misconception that 10 days is sufficient in order to cover the whole of Europe, and to familiarise oneself with the many different features of the continent, its culture, landscapes and history. If overseas travellers can be persuaded to stay longer, this will provide more income for hotels, travel businesses and various other branches of industry that are closely associated with tourism in the Community. Moreover, the Community is planning to provide subsidies for investment during the European

Year of Tourism, in order to attract tourists from all over the world to various European destinations.

Although these measures are predominantly directed at potential travellers from North America and Japan, mention should also be made of other measures for this current year which, it is hoped, will expand tourism within the Community. The aim is to harmonise holiday periods throughout Europe and to reduce distortions. A uniform EC seal of quality will identify clean beaches and water. If this proves successful, it will have an effect on third countries which had previously been popular with travellers from member countries of the EC. Once distortions in the holiday periods have been eliminated, no potential tourist would be compelled to look for destinations outside the Community, unless motivated by quite different preferences. The guarantee of clean beaches is the perfect way of winning back those tourists who were frightened off by polluted resorts in the Community, and who are looking for unspoilt areas, including those in developing countries.

Developing countries making an effort to attract more tourists may also suffer as a result of measures intended to establish a single European market by the end of 1992. Admittedly, the Community seeks to offer reasons

surances that this common market will stimulate growth within the community, thereby creating additional purchasing power. As a result this may intensify trade with the developing countries, as well as increasing the amount of money available to almost 360 million people within the community for the purposes of travel, thereby favouring tourism in developing countries as well.

However, this will do little to allay the fears in developing countries that member states of the Community, especially those which are dependent upon tourism, will implement additional programmes to promote this sector of industry as a part of the process leading towards the establishment of the single European market. A new burst of investment will limit the possibilities for expanding tourism in the developing countries, which are unable to generate the same level of funding. Although this particular action on the part of the Community may not be at the sort of level predicted by critics in developing countries, it is obvious that the single European market will set new benchmarks for tourism.

With the elimination of border checks and liberalisation of transport, the relatively short distances within the Community will be reduced even further, and tourists, always eager to save time, will take advantage of this situation. Along with price reductions and improved productivity in manufacturing, the advent of the single European market also promises certain advantages for the consumer. Competition between hotels and tour operators in various member countries of the Community will put pressure on prices, and this is also likely to draw business away from third countries. Moreover, hotels and

restaurants will have to adjust to this competition, thereby improving their facilities and services. Not only can we expect new investments in the hotel sector, but funds will also be provided to clean up beaches, dispose of sewage more hygienically, and to protect against noise and air pollution. One reaction by communities and cities to this increased competition will be a tendency to prevent the spread of unrestricted building.

These developing countries dependent upon tourism will find that their competitive situation has changed, along with their negotiating power when dealing with travel companies in the Community. This is one consequence of the closer collaboration between tourism companies, which will be unable to survive in the single European market unless they are large enough to cope with changing competitive conditions. In addition, influenced by legislation intended to control competition, the European Commission is undertaking other measures in order to protect customers from excessive prices on protected national markets. For example, in 1987 price agreements between tour operators and travel agencies were declared illegal. The commission has repeatedly criticised the system of licences for the sale of air tickets, and the rules governing commission. A standardised travel law throughout the EC, more closely meeting the needs of consumers, together with improved protection in cases of bankruptcy and insolvency are also on the agenda. These will threaten the existence of medium sized tourism companies in particular, which do not have the capacity to expand their activities through the EC. To prevent the tourism market from being dominated in the long

term by only a few major companies, many of the more prudent voices are calling for the regulation of competition to be applied to cross-border mergers between companies in this sector, the long term intention being to ensure adequate competition.

The developing countries would be well advised to interpret these changes correctly, and avoid false estimates of the probable negative impact. The improved productivity will be in excess of anything that the developing countries are likely to achieve. Such countries would have great difficulty in financing the same kind of investments as the Community. So far they have achieved little success in establishing and expanding tourism industries that are independent, internationally competitive, and capable of sustained growth. The countries of the Third World are hardly in a position to respond to the growing market strength of their customers, since they can offer few alternatives to tourism, and as a rule are dependent on the foreign exchange earnings that it brings. When negotiating with tour operators they will find it virtually impossible to raise costs, since the operators are themselves facing greater competition. It is essential that traditional sales strategies in the Community are re-examined as soon as possible. As the Community grows closer together there will be less justification for maintaining expensive agencies and representatives in individual countries. It is more important than ever to ensure close cooperation with travel agencies and tour operators who are well acquainted with the requirements of potential travellers in the Community, who can respond quickly to changes in customer preferences, and who can adjust their range of

services to meet the available budgets of various groups within the population as a whole. Even if a proportion of the turnover or other costs must be paid, this form of marketing is still more successful than that of the state-owned agencies that many developing countries still operate in numerous countries of the Community. There is no longer any room for such state-run agencies, which do not reflect the needs of the customer, and whose governmentally influenced attitude seeks to promote tourism facilities without taking into account the intensive competition for existing customers.

But it is not just marketing that must be changed as a result of developments in the Community this year and over the next 24 months. It is also essential to implement wide-ranging improvements in the range of services offered by resorts, and available to travellers in Third World countries. All too often one tends to neglect the reforms that could contribute to the reduction of excessive and annoying obstacles: the process of crossing borders should be simplified, although this should not compromise valid security interests, and immigration formalities should also be simplified. Obstacles to foreign trade should be reduced, in order to facilitate collaboration with foreign tour operators and hotel companies. Price stability, legal protection, the avoidance of governmental intervention and excessive taxation are also essential features if suitable economic background conditions are to be created.

Investments should be encouraged, more skilled personnel must be trained, and there must be a better understanding of all the various requirements of tourism policy — ITB Berlin.

Israelis carry out killings

(Continued from page 1)

40 per cent increase over the figure 13 months earlier.

"There was an increase in torture in detention, including the use of electric shock, and significant increases in collective punishments such as house demolitions and broad economic sanctions," Azzam told the news conference.

Al Haq last year had its work honoured by an award from the Human Rights Foundation set up by former US President Jimmy Carter. Israeli diplomats boycotted the presentation ceremony last December in the United States.

The group said its researchers had documented cases of "electric shocks, beatings, burning, squeezing of the testicles as well as sleep and food deprivation. The link and forcing detainees to stand for those challenges long periods in awkward poses, relying on tortions."

A spokesman for the Israeli non-military army, which administers the rule of the occupied territories, said the army "is not responsible for international law violations but we have denied all use of torture."

Shin Bet secret police, who have frequently been accused of

excesses by human rights groups, questioned prisoners.

Al Haq said at least five people have died at the hands of interrogators since the uprising began in December 1987 — two died in 1988 and three last year.

Some 50,000 Palestinians had been detained during the 26-month-long uprising against the occupation.

The organisation said Israel had also increased collective punishment through more demolition or sealing of houses.

It said 228 houses were either entirely destroyed or had rooms sealed last year because of army charges against residents. This policy had left 3,152 people homeless.

Al Haq expressed little confidence that Palestinians could find remedies for abuses through appeals to the legal system.

The report noted that the Israeli high court had not overturned one single order for a Palestinian to be deported or a house demolished.

It said 95 per cent of all trials in the occupied territories ended in convictions. In addition, 10,000 people had been held without trial during the uprising for terms that could be renewed indefinitely.

got on very well... Mandela was... very close... Mandela identified... as Major... was in charge of... Warrant Officer... he black leader... on seven in the... in the afternoon... usually lived with... on the prison... during Mandela's... imprisonment... on Robben Is... ANC officials... one-man state... a 40-year term... a bed roll and... Mandela told... though these... was never... though many of... re.

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EC assures GCC, developing states over ties with E. Europe

GRANADA, Spain (R) — The European Community's (EC's) commitment to help Eastern European countries adapt to economic change will not cause it to neglect other trading partners, a senior EC official pledged Monday.

European Commission Vice-President Martin Bangemann, addressing a conference on industrial cooperation between the 12-nation Community and Arab Gulf countries, sought to reassure Gulf officials and businessmen that plans for a free trade pact would continue apace.

"Possible extension of the European Community and other events in Europe will not reduce or weaken our determination to establish closer political and economic relationships with our partners at global level," he said. Agreements between the Com-

munity and new governments in Eastern Europe and fast moves towards German unification have sparked concern among the EC's trading partners in the developing world.

They fear that the Community might divert its aid to the fledgling regimes in East Europe. Bangemann said the EC's partners, and the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in particular, had nothing to worry about.

The Community will do everything in its power to deepen an existing trade agreement with the GCC and quickly conclude a further reaching accord, he said.

The GCC member states — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates — have often complained of trade barriers erected

by the EC against their infant industries.

GCC countries, striving to diversify their oil-based economies into petrochemicals and aluminium, have also voiced mounting anger at their growing trade deficit with the EC, their main trading partner.

GCC Secretary General Abdullah Bishara told the conference the group's patience was running out. "A trade agreement with the EC is worth having," he said. "Whether it is worth waiting for remains to be seen."

A framework for economic cooperation signed by the two sides in June 1988 was "not a substitute for an institutionalised trade agreement," Bishara added.

Officials from the two groups will meet next month in Oman for

talks on a new pact. But Gulf officials have already clearly expressed their displeasure at the negotiating mandate adopted last December by the EC, which includes a lengthy transition period.

The main bone of contention is the quotas and tariffs with which the EC, fearing a flood of cut-price imports in an already congested market, protects its own petrochemical industry.

Under the free trade proposals, the Community would maintain duties on a list of about 46 types of petrochemicals which the Gulf countries are particularly keen to export.

The three-day conference, in which some 300 businessmen and officials are taking part, continued Tuesday with debates on oil, gas and petrochemicals.

Africa, L. America seen hit by global investment shift

MANILA (R) — Africa and Latin America could be hard hit by a shift in Western investment to Eastern Europe during the 1990s, But East Asia will remain a development bright spot, a senior World Bank official predicted Tuesday.

World Bank Treasurer Donald Roth said Japan and the major Western industrialised countries would step up investment in the former communist economies of Eastern Europe, syphoning funds away from developing countries. While this could have an impact on Asia, he expected the booming Asian economies would go on attracting substantial commercial investment, with Japan dominating capital flows across much of the region.

But he forecast that developing countries in other parts of the world could be seriously affected. "Latin America and Africa will

be pushed to the sidelines with respect to receiving capital flows," he told a media and economic seminar in Manila called the One-Asia Assembly.

"The commercial banks will not return to these markets voluntarily in this century other than for trade and project finance. As far as private sector capital flows are concerned, Africa and Latin America will increasingly be at the margin of investment plans," Roth stated.

He said that Eastern Europe would absorb a much higher proportion of new capital flows and equity investment, with some of the investment attracted from Asia's newly industrialising nations like South Korea and Taiwan.

But at a separate session, Roth emphasised that institutions like the World Bank would go on providing capital to the world's

poorest. He said the World Bank would have \$20 billion a year to lend during the 1990s.

"Eastern Europe will not subtract at all from the bank's ability to lend to developing countries," he stated.

In a speech read for him at the Manila conference, International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Michel Camdessus said incorporating socialist economies into the international economy was the toughest but most promising challenge of the 1990s.

He said transforming centrally-planned economies into more market-oriented ones "will have profound consequences for the coming decade, and for the rest of the world as well as the countries themselves." Camdessus was invited to the conference, but was unable to attend.

Both the IMF and World Bank are already helping Poland. Roth said he expected Romania to resume borrowing from the bank, and Czechoslovakia may become a member in the next few months.

Economist and author John Galbraith said the industrialised countries "must come promptly and generously to the assistance of the countries now in the process of liberalisation... debt service should be suspended and affirmative help in grants and loans must not be confirmed to capital goods," he said.

Help for Eastern Europe should not mean less for other developing countries, he added. Instead, reduced tension should mean reduced military expenditure, which could be used instead to help the world's poorer countries.

UAE minister pushes to end budget deficit

ABU DHABI (R) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is trying to speed up agreement on the federal budget this year in an attempt to wipe out a persistent annual deficit, UAE officials said.

Finance and Industry Minister Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum has sent a letter to federal ministries asking them to trim spending, ministry sources said.

Sheikh Hamdan has said projected revenues in calendar 1990 are 12.84 billion dirhams (\$3.5 billion), the same as 1989 revenues when the UAE showed a budget deficit of 1.81 billion (\$493 million).

"The need has become more pressing this year to tighten expenditure so we will reach a balance between revenues and spending," the sources quoted him as saying in the letter.

Sheikh Hamdan asked ministries to present their draft spending plans by March 20 so the federal budget could be released earlier this year, the sources said.

The UAE has had a federal budget deficit since 1982 when oil export earnings, its main source of revenue, began to decline due to a sharp drop in international oil prices.

The problem is further compli-

cated because, although each of the seven emirates that make up the federation are supposed to contribute half their income to the overall budget, the two richest Dubai and Abu Dhabi provide almost all the money.

For the past six years, protracted negotiations between the emirates have held up budget announcements until almost the end of each budget year.

Because of this, monthly allocations to ministries of one twelfth of the previous year's expenditure have become commonplace and federal spending plans have been held up.

The UAE has mainly relied on the introduction of service fees in such sectors as health, education, business licences, and residence permits, to bring in extra revenue.

The sources said Sheikh Hamdan expected an increase in ministry revenues, mainly from such service fees, but said additional funds would go to pay the government's outstanding debts to contractors and banks.

Meanwhile, the National Bank of Dubai announced record profits for calendar 1989 of 437.95 million dirhams (\$119.33 million) compared to 396.22 million (\$107.96 million) in 1988.

Inflation in OECD countries accelerates

PARIS (Agencies) — Inflation spurred ahead to a six per cent average annual rate in 1989 for the 24 industrialised nations belonging to the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development, the Paris-based group said in a statement Monday.

The figure was ahead of the 4.8 per cent rate for 1988 and 3.9 per cent for 1987, the statement said. The rate of inflation in the United States was 4.8 per cent in 1989, 4.1 per cent in 1988 and 3.7 per cent in 1987.

Turkey posted the highest rate, with 67.6 per cent, but that was down from 75.4 per cent in 1988, the report said. The lowest rates were the Netherlands with 1.1 per cent, Japan with 2.3 per cent, and Austria and West Germany with 2.8 per cent.

Other percentage figures for 1989: Australia, 7.3; Belgium, 3.1; Britain, 7.8; Canada, 5; Denmark, 4.8; Finland, 6.6; France, 3.6; Greece, 13.7; Iceland, 20.7; Ireland, 4.0; Italy, 6.6; Luxembourg, 3.4; New Zealand, 5.7; Norway, 4.6; Portugal, 12.6; Spain, 6.8; Sweden, 6.4 and Switzerland, 3.2.

In another report, the OECD has said that Norway's mainland economy appears to be recovering from a slump but its dependence on North Sea oil has risen despite efforts to diversify since 1986.

"The slump in domestic demand and mainland activity in late 1988 and early 1989 was more pronounced than thought a year ago," the OECD said in a survey.

"However, a recovery, boosted by public spending, appears to have got under way," it added.

ECONOMIC NEWS BRIEFS

N. Yemen gives bonuses to expatriates

SANAA (R) — North Yemen has decided to offer its one million expatriate workers preferential exchange and interest rates in a bid to increase foreign currency remittances, officials and bankers have said. The exchange rate for Yemenis working abroad will be 12 riyals to the dollar, nearly 23 per cent higher than the central bank's official rate, a banker told Reuters. Expatriates will also be able to open bank accounts in foreign currencies at higher interest rates than those offered to riyal depositors at a bank to be set up for that purpose, the banker added. He did not specify the new rates. "These measures are aimed at encouraging Yemeni expatriates to play a role in the development process in the country," the senior official told Reuters. Remittances by Yemenis working in Saudi Arabia, Britain and the United States are the main source of the country's foreign currency. They have been cut by half since the 1986 oil market collapse to around \$255 million a year, officials said.

Chrysler, Renault choose "JJ" site

PARIS (R) — U.S. and French automakers Chrysler and Renault have said they had chosen a Spanish site for a factory to produce a four-wheel-drive recreational vehicle codenamed "JJ" to challenge Japanese rivals. The site, in a redundant plant occupied by Renault's Spanish subsidiary in Valladolid, about 160 kilometres north of Madrid, will produce the vehicles for the European market from 1992 and may also export to the United States, they said. A plant in the United States, probably on a site Chrysler already owns, will be chosen soon for North American output. The plant in the United States, probably on a site Chrysler already owns, will be chosen soon for North American output. The announcement marked another step for the world's car manufacturers as they manoeuvre for position ahead of the creation of a unified European market after 1992, analysts say. Formation of the 2.5 billion franc (\$440 million) Arcad S.A. joint-venture company to produce the "JJ" was announced about a year ago, and constitutes part of Chrysler's oft-stated aim to expand its presence in Europe.

Bulgaria considers privatisation

SOFIA (R) — Bulgaria's reformist leaders have given private farmers more freedom and are considering privatising some shops and restaurants to revitalise the country's stagnant economy. The official BTA news agency said a government decree gave private farmers the right to decide their own production methods and export their produce. It set no limits on the size of the land they can farm. The government also agreed to set up a bank for agrarian credit offering loans to finance the building of small farms and food processing enterprises, BTA said. Bulgaria's new communist leaders are grappling with a \$10 billion foreign debt and widespread food shortages. Prime Minister Andrei Lukanov, a Soviet-educated economist and reformist, has said he wants to boost exports and create a foreign exchange market with a convertible currency. BTA said the ministry of trade and services was proposing a privatisation scheme for retailing and services businesses to the council of ministers.

Modernising E. Germany may cost \$600 billion

HAMBURG, West Germany (R) — The cost of modernising East Germany's ailing economy and its crumbling infrastructure after unification could exceed one trillion Deutschmarks (\$600 billion), a leading West German economist said Tuesday.

"Estimates of more than one trillion marks... for modernising the economy, housing, infrastructure and the environment are not too high," Hans Juergen Schmahl, vice president of Hamburg's HWWA economic research institute, said.

West Germany would manage to finance these huge costs, with private industry bearing the brunt, Schmahl wrote in Hamburg's Abendblatt newspaper.

He said the West German taxpayer's biggest bill could come from having to cushion East German workers from unemployment when the country shifts to a capitalist economy.

The cost to the Bonn government in social security payments has been put at 50 billion marks (\$30 billion) a year but Schmahl said it was still too early to make any estimates.

It was also premature to decide whether West Germany should raise taxes to finance the modernisation of East Germany, he said. But Bonn had to give up its plans to start cutting corporate taxes from next year.

Meanwhile, governing and opposition groups in East Germany urged the government to scrap food subsidies worth 30 billion marks (\$18 billion) before next month's free elections. The move seemed likely to trigger a spurt of panic-buying by East Germans before prices soar.

The round table, which brings together established government parties and opposition groups, agreed to press the cabinet to approve the move and pay each citizen 150 marks (\$90) a month to compensate.

"The long-overdue dismantling of subsidies is one of the first stages of effective economic reform," said a statement by the round table read out on television before it began a session of talks.

Rafsanjani proposes '90-'91 budget with \$22 billion deficit

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani Tuesday proposed an \$80 billion budget with a deficit of \$22 billion for the next Iranian year beginning March 21.

Tehran radio quoted Rafsanjani as telling parliament the budget included income from natural gas exports for the first time in many years and projected an increase of 21 per cent in oil and gas revenue and 41 per cent in tax receipts.

It envisaged that output from heavy industry would rise 50 per cent and that there would be substantial investment in electricity, and transport, he said.

"Effective forces have realised that the country needs more work to resolve problems stemming from the war and the revolutionary situation and those handed down from the previous era," Rafsanjani said when proposing the budget bill to parliament.

Troubled economy
Western and Iranian economists in the Gulf say that Iran's economy is in trouble and that hopes of recovery raised 18 months ago by a ceasefire with Iraq have been badly dented.

The president described the budget as the first step in implementing a five-year economic plan adopted last month which foresees an average annual growth rate of eight per cent.

The budget aims for a jump in capital expenditures — by 60 per cent to 1,631.3 billion riyals (\$23.3 billion).

But in many other aspects, including its 15.6 per cent rise in current expenditure, the budget continues the previous years' policy of deficit spending, designed to finance the war against Iraq and feed a rapidly growing population on limited income.

Rafsanjani said nearly one-tenth of the capital expenditure would be made in the agricultural sector but the government would continue importing more than 10 million tonnes of basic goods — much of it food sold at subsidised prices.

The radio did not give a figure for military spending.

Oil production

Rafsanjani said Iran would boost its total crude oil production capacity to 3.57 million barrels a day and expect to earn 1,089.6 billion riyals (\$15.6 billion) from oil and gas next year. Of that total, 20 million riyals (\$286 million) would come from natural gas exports and 30.4 billion riyals (\$434 million) from export of refined products.

Iran has agreed to resume exports of natural gas to the Soviet Union on April 1 after a 10-year lapse.

Rafsanjani said tax revenue would reach 1,623.7 billion riyals (\$23.2 billion) with business tax receipts increasing at a higher rate than income tax to improve the lop-sided tax structure.

The other third of the total revenue of 4,009.7 billion riyals (\$57.3 billion) would be provided by "other incomes" which include the sale of foreign exchange to businessmen at a competitive rate currently more than 11 times official parity of about 70 riyal per dollar.

Current expenditures account for 3,964.5 billion riyals (\$56.6 billion) more than 70 per cent of total spending of 5,595.8 (\$79.9 billion).

That leaves a budget deficit of 1,586.1 billion riyals (\$22.6 billion), nearly 18 per cent more than the current year's planned shortfall.

Borrowing

Preliminary figures in the five-year plan set a limit of 1,439 billion riyals (\$20.6 billion) on government borrowing from the central bank to cover the deficit next year. The rest was to be met by returns from previous years' payments.

The budget included credits for building 1,800 kilometres of road and two new oil refineries, the president said.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Tuesday, February 20, 1990
Central Bank official rates

	Buy	Sell	French franc	118.1	118.8
U.S. dollar	671.0	675.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	464.1	466.9
Pound Sterling	1146.2	1153.1	Dutch guilder	336.2	338.3
Deutschmark	401.4	403.8	Swedish crown	109.5	110.2
Swiss franc	452.2	454.9	Italian lira (for 100)	54.1	54.4
			Belgian franc (for 10)	192.1	193.3

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One Sterling	1.7090/100	U.S. dollars	
One U.S. dollar	1.1990/2000	Canadian dollar	
	1.6715/22	Deutschmarks	
	1.8835/45	Dutch guilders	
	1.4822/32	Swiss francs	
	34.92/95	Belgian francs	
	5.6780/830	French francs	
	1240/1241	Italian lire	
	145.25/35	Japanese yen	
	6.1060/160	Swedish crowns	
	6.4475/525	Norwegian crowns	
	6.4470/520	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	418.75/419.25	U.S. dollars	

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

SYDNEY — Australia's share market fell on fears about rising overseas interest rates and a fall in the Tokyo market. The All Ordinaries Index finished down 15.5 at 1,630.4.

TOKYO — Share prices closed broadly lower in sympathy with drops in yen bond prices in very thin trading. Selling hit many blue chip issues. The 225-share Nikkei average fell 327.08 to 36,895.52.

HONG KONG — Stocks ended slightly up as the market benefited from improved sentiment that has lasted several weeks. The Hang Seng Index closed up 12.9 at 2,980.90.

SINGAPORE — The Straits Times Industrial Index continued its climb for a fourth straight day and closed up 2.17 at 1,595.4. The previous all-time high of 1,594.77 was set on Feb. 2.

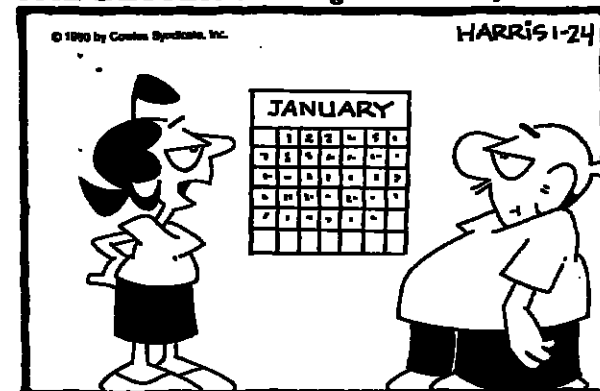
BOMBAY — Shares ended down but off lows as state-owned investment trusts bought heavily after the market dropped sharply in early trading. The Bombay Stock Exchange Index fell 5.06 points to 674.47.

FRANKFURT — West German shares plunged 2.5 per cent in moderate trading as the market succumbed to mounting worries about continued weakness on the German bond market. The Dax index fell 45.38 points to end at 1,823.81.

ZURICH — Swiss shares closed lower as the Zurich Bourse took its lead from lower prices in Frankfurt, dealers said. Turnover was low, with some selling by foreign investors. The All-Share SPI Index lost 10.9 points to close at 1,117.

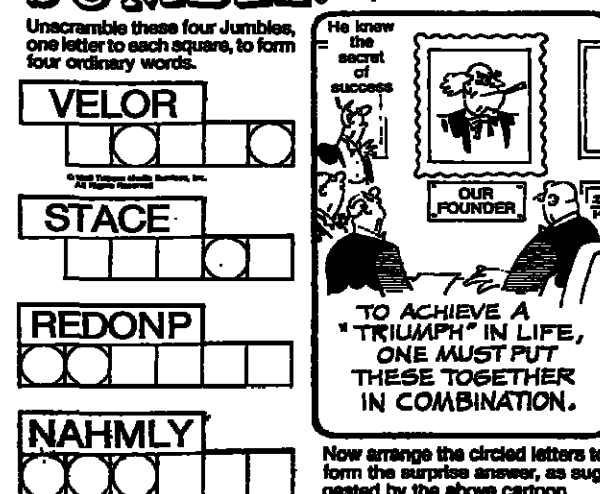
THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



"Is it January already? Goodness, it's almost time for my annual kiss!"

JUMBLE



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Jordan Times

Tel: 667171

Peanuts

My Grampa says that when he was small, and got sick, the doctor gave him baby aspirin...

Last week his cardiologist told him he should take one baby aspirin every day...

Grampa says that somehow he has the feeling he's not getting anyplace...

Can I borrow your garden spade, Tom?

You haven't returned it from last time.

It's your fork I haven't returned! Mate — get your facts right!!

Not a seat or a gentleman on this train!

Watch me embarrass a seat out of one of these sittin' bulls!

Why, Mr. Brown! Fancy meeting you here! I'm glad to see you! I'm tired!

Sit down, Bertha, old gal! It ain't often I see you out on washday! How are all your babies?

Come on Jeff! We get off here!

Ireland tells U.K. not to break ranks over Pretoria sanctions

DUBLIN (Agencies) — Ireland told Britain Tuesday not to break ranks with its European Community partners by lifting sanctions against South Africa.

In an interview with Irish radio before the start of a meeting of the 12 EC foreign ministers in Dublin, Irish Foreign Minister Gerry Collins said:

"It would have very serious implications if they do that. The entire credibility of European political cooperation would be on the line."

Collins, chairing the talks because Ireland currently holds the EC presidency, confirmed that Britain was alone in pressing for the Community's ban on new investments to be lifted now that South Africa had freed black nationalist leader Nelson Mandela.

Asked whether suggestions that Britain might act alone were putting him under pressure, he said:

"I'm not under any pressure whatsoever in any way, nor indeed are any of my other 10 colleagues who I think share the same views as I do."

"Perhaps the British are under certain pressure, self-imposed pressure with regard to positions which I understand from the newspapers they are taking up, and that is what they would break away from the consensus which is already there."

Apart from the investment ban, EC sanctions also bar exports of arms and imports of South African gold coins, iron and steel.

Britain, which agreed only grudgingly to international sanctions to press South Africa to end apartheid, says President F.W. de Klerk should be rewarded and encouraged for releasing Mandela, legalising the African National Congress, and opening the way for negotiations with the black majority.

Other governments say they want all political prisoners freed, an end to the state of emergency and concrete steps towards the

abolition of apartheid before any sanctions are removed.

Diplomats said ministers could agree to send a "troika" of EC foreign ministers to South Africa to assess the situation. This would in itself be an important political gesture.

The troika would comprise Ireland, France and Italy — the current, past and future holders of the EC presidency. Collins said that any mission should meet all parties in South Africa, including de Klerk.

EC ministers start talks
European Community foreign ministers met here Tuesday, with Britain pressing the wealthy trading bloc to drop the ban on new investment in South Africa and hinting it may lift the embargo unilaterally.

Irish officials said British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd appeared to be isolated in his demand for an immediate easing of sanctions.

The Community's commissioner for external relations, Frans Andriessen, added in an Irish radio interview that the one-day

meeting "will not be easy. But there might be much of understanding than people believe there to be."

The foreign ministers were also expected to focus on rapid moves toward German unification. Ireland announced last week it will summon a special European Community summit in April because of the pace of development.

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, the West's most outspoken opponent of sanctions against South Africa, argues that the Community's relatively mild embargoes should be lifted gradually to reward the white-led government's reforms.

Apart from Britain, the Community includes three of South Africa's other major trading partners — West Germany, Italy and France.

In angry exchanges with opposition legislators in the British parliament last week, Hurd said that if there is no agreement in Dublin, "the government must reserve its right to act on its own if necessary."

IRA seeks talks with Britain over N. Ireland

DUBLIN (R) — IRA guerrilla leaders have offered to sit down for talks with Britain and said a ceasefire in Northern Ireland's 20-year-old conflict would be the first item on the agenda.

The surprise olive branch was offered to Britain's Northern Ireland Minister Peter Brooke by a source close to the Irish Republican Army's seven-man "army council."

Pledging talks with no preconditions, he told a Dublin news agency: "The dialogue would be direct between the British government and the IRA."

He promised that a ceasefire would top the agenda. "A cease-

fire could be implemented through the chain of command within hours. Neither is the IRA demanding that talks are dependent on British troops being recalled to their barracks."

His Monday night comments were the second republican peace feeler put out within 24 hours and indicated that there may be a major internal debate in the movement about the IRA campaign.

Martin McGuinness, vice-president of the IRA's political wing Sinn Fein, asked in a weekend speech what imaginative steps Brooke might take if guerrilla attacks halted in the province

where almost 3,000 people have been killed since 1969.

That prompted a quick response from Britain's Northern Ireland office. "If the IRA and Sinn Fein are coming to realise that violence has profited no one in Northern Ireland, that could be an encouraging sign," it said.

"But the government's position remains the same — as long as Sinn Fein support and endorse terrorism they cannot expect to be treated in the same way as any other political party. The choice facing them is clear."

Brooke is the first British minister to concede publicly that it would be difficult to envisage a

military defeat of the IRA, fighting one of the world's longest-running guerrilla conflicts for two decades now.

Sinn Fein leaders have expressed concern about the drop in the revolutionary party's electoral support — down to nine per cent in Northern Ireland and one per cent in the Irish republic.

Even its most ardent supporters have harshly criticised the IRA for killing civilians in a string of bungled bomb attacks stretching back to November, 1987, when 11 people were killed by an IRA bomb blast at a war memorial ceremony in Enniskillen.

Comoros announces elections for March

MORONI (R) — The Comoro Islands have set a fresh presidential election for March 4 after balloting in the country's first-ever poll collapsed in chaos Sunday.

State-run radio Comoros announced the new date following an emergency cabinet meeting Monday.

If none of the eight candidates gets more than 50 per cent of the vote, a run-off ballot between the two leading contenders will take place March 11.

Seven opposition candidates accused interim President Said Mohammed Djohar, who is contesting the polls, of trying to rig Sunday's election and demanded his resignation.

He has denied the charges, blaming election officials and the opposition for the collapse of the vote.

The seven were expected to respond to the announcement on the fresh poll after a meeting in the capital Moroni Tuesday.

But one, Said Ali Kemal, said he would like the election to be organised by France, which ruled the Indian ocean archipelago until its independence in 1975. No elections have been held since.

France sent troops to the Comoros after the assassination of President Mohammad Abdallah last November and the seizure of power by European mercenaries commanding his presidential guard.

Nepalese back democracy

KATHMANDU (R) — Nepal's 1,800 lawyers went on strike Tuesday in support of a campaign for multiparty democracy in which at least six people have died.

Members of the Nepal Bar Association, 100 of whom demonstrated outside the main government offices, said they had paralysed the country's judicial system.

"The rule of law, the right to organise, human rights and an impartial and independent judiciary are some of the factors where we do share an identical point of view with the campaigners," former association head Nutan Thapaliya said.

There were no fresh reports of trouble after two days of violence in Nepal during the launch of the

movement for the restoration of democracy and a general strike Monday in support of it.

Residents of the Kathmandu valley town of Bhaktapur, the main focus of Monday's battles between demonstrators and riot police, said it still was very tense Tuesday.

They said many people in the Communist stronghold 20 kilometres from the Nepali capital feared further trouble, with calls circulating for more demonstrations to protest against Monday's deaths.

The residents said at least five people were killed by police who opened fire on stone-throwing crowds and that unconfirmed reports put the toll at more than 10. The government confirmed only three deaths in Bhaktapur.

Some opposition party officials

claimed to have seen army patrols during the night there. There was no confirmation of that from the government, which has said it wants to keep the army out of the troubles.

Political parties banned for 30 years launched the movement Sunday with demonstrations in most of the impoverished country's towns.

The government, which has vowed to crush the movement, put Sunday's death toll at three, one fewer than reported by some local officials.

It issued an appeal to residents of the Kathmandu valley, the country's richest and most fertile area, to report unfamiliar faces to the police after a government minister alleged extremists fomented the Bhaktapur violence.

Cheney leaves for Japan amid Philippine protests

CLARK AIR BASE, Philippines (R) — U.S. Defence Secretary Dick Cheney flew to Japan Tuesday after reaffirming Washington's determination to comply with its aid pledges to the Philippines.

A joint communique on Cheney's talks with Philippine Defence Chief Fidel Ramos said they "reaffirmed the continuing need for a security relationship between the two countries" amid demands by many Manila lawmakers for the removal of U.S. military bases from the country.

Soon after Cheney's plane took off from the U.S. Clark Air Base, masked demonstrators screaming

"bases out" charged a gate at the camp but were driven back by American and Philippine guards.

Dozens of people were injured Monday when riot troops battled leftist demonstrators in front of the U.S. embassy in Manila and outside Clark. The protesters also hanged and burned Cheney's effigy.

"My general impression is that the reception has been pretty good in the Philippines," Cheney told reporters while touring Clark before flying to Japan.

Asked about being burned in effigy, Cheney said: "I didn't realise it until I turned on the television this morning."

Relations between the military allies have increasingly soured in recent weeks after the U.S. Congress shaved \$96 million from a 1990 aid commitment totalling \$481 million for the bases.

President Corason Aquino refused to meet Cheney and many Manila lawmakers demanded the scrapping of exploratory talks planned for April on the future of the U.S. bases.

The U.S. lease on Clark, Subic Naval Base and four smaller facilities is to expire in 1991 and a strong bloc in the Philippine senate, which must approve any new bases accord, has called for their removal.

Thatcher isolates herself over South Africa, a unified Germany and taxes

LONDON (AP) — Fighting alone to relax South African sanctions and evoking World War II memories over German unification, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher appears at her most isolated internationally.

Critics, including some of her own supporters and pro-conservative newspapers, accuse her of forfeiting Britain's influence in a fast-changing Europe and in a post-apartheid South Africa by clinging to outdated attitudes.

Thatcher aides argue that on Germany she says out loud what others believe and that it is her policy of seeking to encourage, not punish, South Africa's white rulers that has helped bring reforms and the Feb. 11 release of Nelson Mandela.

The storm over Mrs. Thatcher's foreign policy and

charges of cold war nostalgia have blown up amid mounting government unpopularity on domestic issues, particularly because of soaring interest rates and a controversial new property tax.

Trailing in opinion polls for the last nine months, the conservatives slumped to a 15-year low behind the Socialist Labour Party in the two latest soundings this month, by Gallup and ICN. Both showed Labour with around 50 per cent support and the Tories some 15 points behind.

Britain will try at a meeting of foreign ministers in Dublin on Tuesday to get the 12-nation European Community to lift a ban on new investment in South Africa. If the others refuse to budge, Britain has indicated it may break ranks.

"If we fail to reach agreement, then the government must reserve its right to act on its own, if necessary," British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said during angry exchanges in the House of Commons last week.

Retorted Labour's foreign affairs spokesman Gerald Kaufman, "to be alone in the world and right it heroic. But to be alone in the world and wrong is futile and destructive."

He was shouted down by Conservative Party legislators. But there were signs of unease among the governing party rank-and-file, and several urged that Britain stick with the rest of the community over sanctions.

On German unification, Britain welcomed last Tuesday's agreement providing for the United States, the Soviet Union,

Britain and France — conquerors of Nazi Germany in World War II — and the two Germans to agree on the external repercussions.

But Mrs. Thatcher continues to sound cautious.

In a speech to Britain's Jewish leaders Sunday, she said one Germany was inevitable, but added, "it is understandable that for some, bitter memories of the past should colour their view of the present and future."

Last week, Mrs. Thatcher sympathised with Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki's fears about Poland's borders, which include pre-war German territories. Britain and Poland, she said, shared experiences this century "which we are determined should not happen again."



Ingvar Carlsson

Carlsson asked to form new government

STOCKHOLM, (AP) — Ingvar Carlsson, prime minister of Sweden's caretaker government, was asked Monday to form a new government to replace his cabinet, which resigned last week.

The speaker of parliament turned to Carlsson after the opposition leader, Carl Bildt of the moderate party, said he had failed to assemble a center-right coalition.

"The speaker has asked me to explore possibilities of forming a new government. I will now start that work, and I have been given until Wednesday evening," Carlsson said after he was summoned to the office of speaker Thage G. Peterson.

Carlsson's minority Social Democratic government resigned Thursday after parliament defeated proposals for a two-year wage and price freeze intended to combat inflation.

Carlsson said his hopes of reconstituting a cabinet hinged on building support for a new economic programme, but the refusal to say where he would seek backing and how he would modify his proposals.

Bildt disclosed that Peterson had given him a chance Saturday to try to assemble a non-Socialist coalition, but that he could not muster a majority or a working minority.

"The baton now goes to Ingvar Carlsson," Bildt said.

The social democrats, who control 156 seats in the 349-member Riksdag, have ruled as a minority government with the support of the 21-seat Communist party.

But the Communists joined the center-right opposition to defeat the government's economic package, arguing that it would hurt low-income earners.

Under the constitution, Peterson may assign the task of building a government four times, after which elections must be held.

The Social Democrats, who have governed Sweden for all but six years since 1932, suffered another blow Friday when Finance Minister Kjell-Olof Feldt resigned from the caretaker cabinet.

Feldt was the architect of Sweden's economic recovery starting in 1982, and in recent years won respect from businessmen for gradually reducing the regulation of financial markets and banking.

Feldt said he was blocked by parliament from imposing the tight fiscal policies he contended were needed to stop a wage-cost slide threatening Swedish exports. He said he lacked backing from his own party on some of his ideas.

Bildt's moderates and the Liberal party have called for an early election to resolve the political crisis that ensued from Carlsson's resignation.

Kaifu prepares new cabinet

TOKYO (AP) — Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu, bolstered by what he called a vote of confidence in parliamentary elections, met Tuesday to discuss a new lineup for the cabinet.

Members of the liberal democratic party's powerful executive and general councils tendered their resignations at meetings Tuesday morning, clearing the way for Kaifu and party power-brokers to begin negotiations for the top cabinet and party posts.

The party leaders also discussed strategies for battling the opposition over taxes and the budget when parliament convenes later this month.

Before Sunday's election for the lower house of parliament, Kaifu's position had appeared shaky. He has a weak personal power base within the LDP and there were doubts the LDP would do well at the polls following an influence-buying scandal and an unpopular 3 per cent sales tax.

Before the elections, Kaifu said he would resign after six months in office if the party failed to retain at least 257 of the 512 lower house seats.

But Sunday's election brought 275 seats back to the Liberal Democrats and 14 conservative independents are likely to join them later. The ruling party will form a government not far behind the 295 seats they held in the outgoing house. The top opposition Socialists won 136 seats, up from 83.

Though the combined opposition fell far short of ousting the Liberal Democrats from control of the lower house, it holds a majority in the upper house, which must give its assent to most bills passed by the lower house. The lower house can name the prime minister, pass the budget and approve treaties without upper house assent.

Kaifu said the election result "absolved" the party of its taint of scandal, and promptly declared that he would serve out his two-year term as party president.

"We started when the party was said to be in the greatest crisis since it was formed," Kaifu told reporters. "The result of the election is a vote of confidence of the people under the constitution, and our government has passed it."

Foreign Minister spokesman Taizo Watanabe told reporters Tuesday that U.S. President George Bush has congratulated Kaifu in a letter on the election results.

Analysts say Kaifu's staying power will face several tough tests — including how he deals with Japan's chronic trade surplus with the United States — in the coming months. It also is possible he might misstep and become vulnerable again.

If he does, a more powerful figure within the Liberal Democratic Party, former Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe, is widely thought to be preparing to try to replace him.

Peruvians poised for elections stage protests

LIMA, (R) — Banks clerks, prison employees and construction workers walked off their jobs Monday as strikes spread across Peru seven weeks before presidential elections.

Most banks were closed due to a one-day strike by Peru's 30,000 bank workers to demand a doubling in their wages, which union leaders said would only begin to compensate for inflation running at about 30 per cent a month.

Civilian staff at the nation's prisons, textile factory workers, construction workers and employees of the state Merchant Marine Company CPV all walked off the job to demand immediate wage increases.

Bodies have piled up at the Lima morgue due to a week-old morgue workers' strike that has caused backlogs in autopsies and embalmings.

Inflation has eroded real wages to about half of what they were in 1985 when Social Democratic President Alan Garcia took office, economists say.

"Workers are suffering and starving. The government must

be made to understand that we cannot go on this way," said Leonardo Ramirez, vice-president of the powerful Mineworkers' Federation, which called a three-day nationwide strike for next month.

Peru's largest union grouping, the Communist-led General Peruvian Labour Confederation (CGTP), was considering calling a general strike before presidential elections April 8, CGTP spokesmen said.

The strike would be aimed at waning the front-runner, centre-right candidate Mario Vargas Llosa, "that workers will not cease their struggle no matter who leads the next government," said a CGTP spokesman.

Vargas Llosa, who is also Peru's most famous novelist, has shown about 55 per cent support in recent opinion polls.

Garcia, barred by the constitution from seeking reelection, is grappling with Peru's worst economic crisis of this century and two leftist guerrilla movements whose insurgencies have claimed about 17,000 lives since 1980.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Havel visits Bush

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vaclav Havel, the dissident playwright who went from prison to the presidency of Czechoslovakia inside of eight months, met with President George Bush Tuesday, the first of Eastern Europe's new pro-democracy leaders to visit the White House. Havel arrived Monday evening after stops in Iceland and Canada on a western trip that comes conspicuously a week before his first trip to Moscow. The Czech parliament elected Havel president Dec. 29, a few weeks after a peaceful revolution led to the ouster of Communist Party chief Milos Jakes and his hard-line government. Havel has said he is coming West not to look for charity but investment in a country that already maintains a standard of living well above many others in the East Bloc.

Scotland Yard investigates Ouko killing

NAIROBI (AP) — Two British detectives and a pathologist are joining a probe into the death of Foreign Minister Robert Ouko, whose partially burned body was found with a bullet through the head and lying next to his own gun. The British team is composed of superintendent John Troon and inspector Graham Dennis of Scotland Yard and Dr. Ian West, the government said Monday night. The move was seen at least in part as a government attempt to allay fears of a cover-up. University students in Nairobi have demonstrated for three days demanding an impartial investigation. Ouko's partially burned body was found by police Friday in the bush six kilometres from his family home in Koru, near Lake Victoria in Western Kenya.

Boat people protest repatriation policy

HONG KONG (AP) — Four Vietnamese men slashed their abdomens Tuesday to protest the policy that threatens to return them to their homeland, and a detention camp fight injured three others later in the day, officials said. The four men, aged 25 to 40, were hurried to a hospital after injuring themselves with homemade weapons at whitehead detention centre, said government spokeswoman Winnie To. Their wounds were not serious and they left the hospital after refusing treatment, she said. Four other boat people facing repatriation injured themselves in a similar fashion earlier this year at the detention centre. They all survived, but another Vietnamese man hanged himself Friday after being denied refugee status.

Taiwanese clash with police

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Rock-burling protesters demanding greater democracy fought a phalanx of club-wielding riot police Tuesday in a roving battle around the legislature building, and at least nine people were reported injured. The clash broke out after 1,000 demonstrators, mostly from the opposition democratic progressive party, harassed aging lawmakers of the ruling Nationalist Party as they tried to enter the building to elect a new parliamentary speaker.

COLUMN

In time for her funeral

NICOSIA (R) — An Omani woman being prepared for burial sat up and shouted "I'm still alive" after her son splashed her with water as part of traditional Muslim rites, the Omani news agency said. "The woman appears to have been in a long coma and her family thought she was dead," said the agency, received in Cyprus. It did not name her but said she lived in Liwa province northwest of Muscat.

Healing through prayer fails

SANTA MONICA, California (AP) — A Christian scientist couple who tried to heal their ailing 15-month-old child through prayers were acquitted on charges of involuntary manslaughter and child endangerment. Los Angeles county superior court judge Robert Thomas ruled there was insufficient evidence to convict Eliot and Lise Glaser on the charges filed in the death of their son, Seth. The toddler died March 28, 1984 of meningitis following a two-day illness. Under state law, parents are required to provide for the basic needs of their children, including food, clothing and medical care. A 1976 law sponsored by the Christian Science Church, however, exempts parents who treat children through prayer. The court's decision turned on evidence that the child showed brief periods of recovery during predominant periods of high fever, vomiting and disorientation, said the prosecutor, deputy district attorney David Wells. The judge ruled indications of recovery raised a reasonable doubt as to whether the religious healing was a wanton and grossly negligent act, Wells said.

Pompeii statue dug up

POMPEII, Italy (AP) — Archaeologists have unearthed a marble statue buried in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 A.D., newspapers reported. The small statue, which depicts a baby boy riding a dolphin, was found Saturday afternoon in the house of the Casti Amanti, near the centre of the abandoned city, Il Mattino of Naples and other papers reported. Archaeologists said the statue was apparently to be used to decorate a fountain in the house, but that Vesuvius erupted before workers had a chance to set it in place. Experts said traces of paint that coloured the hair blond and eyebrows black made the find even more valuable. Experts believe the house of Casti Amanti was owned by a baker, who lived on one side and kept a shop on the other. The last statue to be found in Pompeii was a bronze dug up in 1977.

Cannibals — group of the year

LONDON (AP) — The pop band Fine Young Cannibals was named best British group of the year in London last Sunday night but missed the ceremony because they are in Los Angeles rehearsing for the U.S. Grammy awards today. The group's million-selling album, "The Rave and the Cooked," also won the award for the best album by a British artist or group. The Brits 1990 awards were organised by the British Phonographic Industry, which is giving to a music charity the unspecified proceeds from the ceremony and from a TV recording of it. Presenter Jonathan King said the recording had been sold in advance to 30 countries and had a potential audience of 800 million.

Global weather

(major world cities)

	MIN.		MAX.		
	C	F	C	F	Weather
AMSTERDAM	12	54	18	61	Cloudy
ATHENS	04	39	14	57	Cloudy
BAHRAIN	17	63	21	70	Clear
BANGKOK	25	77	33	91	Clear
Buenos Aires	18	64	25	77	Clear
CAIRO	10	50	18	64	Clear
CHICAGO	-08	18	-01	30	Clear
COPENHAGEN	04	39	08	43	Cloudy
FRANKFURT	X	X	X	X	X
HONG KONG	05	41	15	59	Clear
HOUSTON	17	63	18	64	Rain
ISTANBUL	04	39	10	50	Cloudy
LONDON	12	54	14	57	Cloudy
LOS ANGELES	08	43	13	55	Clear
MAOPI	05	41	15	59	Clear
MECCA	17	63	30	86	Cloudy
MONTREAL	-14	07	-02	36	Snow
MOSCOW	-10	14	-03	27	Clear
NEW DELHI	10	50	20	68	Clear
NEW YORK	02	36	18	65	Clear
PARIS	09	48	15	59	Clear
ROME	08	43	19	65	Clear
SYDNEY	10	50	27	80	Clear
TOKYO	07	45	18	61	Rain
VIENNA	05	39	12	54	Clear

(X) = insufficient reliable information